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THE BACKS OF BOOKS

AND OTHER ESSAYS IN LIBRARIANSHIP

THE BACKS *of* BOOKS

AND OTHER ESSAYS IN LIBRARIANSHIP

By

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THESE ADDRESSES ARE DEDICATED
TO MY WIFE
THEIR INSPIRATION AND THEIR
KINDLIEST CRITIC

PREFACE

If an apology is needed for bringing into collected form these essays on various phases of the librarian's calling, it may be found in the efforts which are now making toward increasing the somewhat meagre volume of material for the study of librarianship. I am concerned to rescue these essays and addresses from the obscurity of various library bulletins and journals in the hope that my younger colleagues may find something of interest and possible aid to their studies. It may be remarked that while my occasional prophecies have not all been realized, I have found very little in the experience of twenty-five years to cause me to revise or modify the views I expressed in my earlier articles. Whether this puts me down as hopelessly fossilized or really right, I leave to the kindly judgment of my readers.

My thanks are due to the editors of various journals for their kind permission to reprint these addresses.

W. W. B.

March 7, 1925

CONTENTS

1. The Backs of Books 1
2. The Vatican Library: Some Notes by a Student 15
3. The Vatican Library: Twenty-five Years After 25
4. Book-Hunting in Rome 28
5. Should the Librarian Be a Bibliophile 37
6. A Decade of Library Progress in America 49
7. The Amount of Help to be given to Readers 65
8. Two Unsolved Problems in Library Work 82
9. Training in the Use of Books 99
10. Cataloging as an Asset 125
11. The Theory of Reference Work 149
12. Leadership through Learning 165
13. Changing Ideals in Librarianship 183
14. Our College and University Libraries—A Survey and a Program 202
15. The Library and Post-school Education 226
16. The American Library Association at the Crossroads 252
17. The Record of Science 270
18. Fashions in Books 304

THE BACKS OF BOOKS[1]

Few men who are called upon to address graduating classes in colleges and schools can refrain from the temptation to usurp the functions of the preacher. Here is an opportunity too tempting to be missed. The familiar surroundings so soon to be abandoned, the eager students facing their life-work, the parting of teachers and pupils, combine to set the commencement speaker in the way of moralizing on the situation, so well-worn by manifold predecessors, so painfully familiar to every audience of this sort. Try as I may to avoid preaching to you, I too shall probably be found pointing morals, if not adorning tales, for the occasion inevitably lends itself to the giving of gratuitous advice.

There are, however, some differences between the graduation of a class of prospective librarians and the ordinary school or college commencement. There is the obvious fact, which this class shares with all similar classes in professional schools, that you have been prepared for a specific line of work and are about to enter on the actual practice of your profession. The impending change from theory

[1] Address delivered at the Commencement Exercises, Library School, New York Public Library, June 12, 1914.

to practice faces likewise the graduates of schools of law, medicine, theology, and engineering. But your situation differs in at least one respect from theirs. For years they (and you) have been hearing lectures, working in laboratories, studying text-books. From books they have chiefly gathered the theory and training they are about to exercise on a more or less unwilling world. But you are to abandon the formal study of individual books as vehicles of knowledge for the practical handling of books in masses for the benefit of other people. In other words, you are to take what you have learned in a few books and apply it to the marshalling and serving of many books in libraries in aid of readers. What you have gained in theory is to be applied in practice to the very material from which the theory has been evolved, only the application is no longer for your own benefit, but for another's.

Your work therefore will necessarily involve a collection of books as a fundamental basis. Without books there are no libraries or librarians. It is occasionally necessary for some of us to speak up and say this plainly, for the library press and the discussion at conventions teem with so much talk about methods, about ways and means, about library extension, about librarians, that one sometimes wonders what it is all about, and where the books come in. So you will, perhaps, pardon an older

librarian for speaking, not about his favorite methods in library work, not about the nobility of our calling, nor even the mission of the librarian, but just a bit about our books and the extent to which we know them. "*Die Hauptsache*," said a German scholar to me years ago in discussing libraries, "*Die Hauptsache ist die Bücher zu besitzen.*" Absolutely fundamental, but too often neglected, is this cardinal principle of library economy. Without books, many, many books, there is no need for this school, or for this graduating class. The chief defect of our American libraries is, perhaps, the exaltation of method over content. To say this in the very home and citadel of training in method—a library school—may seem strange, even presumptuous; but to say it in the building which houses the noble collections of The New York Public Library is both safe, and, I trust, acceptable.

I wish, then, to speak very briefly on the librarian's knowledge of the books entrusted to his care (particularly in libraries of some size), on his familiarity with his collections. How far may he actually recall even the titles of books, much less know their contents? Is it possible for a truly competent person to remember the names of practically all the authors and titles in a good-sized library? Of course definite answers to these questions are obviously difficult. But I call to mind many a librarian who certainly

holds in his head many thousand separate titles, who can with an extraordinary quickness name different editions and publishers of books he has consulted but a few times. I once asked my honored friend Mr. Anderson H. Hopkins, then assistant librarian of the John Crerar Library, how far he was personally familiar with the books in that institution—I knew they had all passed through his hands (for the library was then new), and that he had a very retentive memory, but I was hardly prepared to hear him say that up to the first sixty thousand volumes purchased he could recall practically every title, but that above that number he began to lose track of the accessions. I am convinced that this was no over-statement, for in my own experience I have met not a few librarians whose knowledge of titles equalled his. Such men as Dr. Spofford and Mr. David Hutcheson of the Library of Congress doubtless knew intimately several times that number. And it is the familiar experience of reference librarians that at least appropriate titles, if not always the one best book, seem often to leap into memory to answer a reader's demand. The older choice libraries of about one hundred thousand volumes were probably pretty well held in mind by their directors, particularly when these were men of unusual ability.

It is a curious sort of knowledge, this acquaintance with a library. It is the backs of books that we

know; those solemn rows that are seldom disturbed, those less stately ones whose battered appearance and unsteady carriage testify to their popularity. The familiar anecdote of the Kansas legislator who objected to an appropriation for more books for the university library touches peculiarly the librarian. "Mr. Speaker," said he, "I object to spending this money. Why, they've got forty thousand books there at Lawrence now, and I don't believe any one of them professors has read 'em all yet!" Neither have we read ours, and yet we know them, and sometimes know them well.

At least we know them well enough to help other folk to get what they want out of them. In every library in the world persons are constantly seeking material on topics which the librarian has never studied, and which he never will study. Unmoved and undismayed by his ignorance of, let us say, ballistics, or ceramics, or Egyptian tombs, he is somehow able to introduce the reader to the books on these or countless other subjects. And somehow, particularly if the librarian does not pretend to undue knowledge, the reader is often helped materially. He even feels grateful, and occasionally says so in print. (I pass over the times when he doesn't.) One knows the backs of his books so well, and somehow has imbibed such a sense of their relative values, that the competent reference librarian becomes one of the most useful folk imaginable.

It should not be forgotten, however, that this knowledge is one of method fully as much as of the books or their appearance. The reader is generally unfamiliar with the order in which the books have been arranged and the means employed to list them. It is the librarian's intimate acquaintance with classification and cataloging which give him such an advantage over the reader in arriving quickly at desired books or information. You know the order in which your books fall. You know the ins and outs of your own catalog. You have at hand all manner of indexes and of catalogs of other libraries. So you give a man at once something to keep him occupied, while you hastily look up the things he really wants. And before he has time to thank you, you begin on the same process for half a dozen others. So it goes, day in and day out. Of course the backs of the books become familiar—you live with them. Of course it is easy to run down "aggravating ladies," and others who have frequently changed their names in print. You do it all the time. Of course you know that the British Museum Catalog enters biographies under the name of the subject. That fact has helped you out of many a tight place. It is this intimate acquaintance with the tools of the trade which makes for speed and accuracy. And precisely those librarians whose memory for the actual volumes on their shelves is most retentive

are likely to know best both their tools and the proper method of using them. If we can perform what seem to the uninitiated sleight of hand tricks with cards and books, it is because we know well catalogs, classification, indexes. In fact, a knowledge of the classification in force in the library in which you are working almost takes the place (for practical purposes) of knowledge of the contents of the books themselves.

Let me illustrate this: A friend brought me what appeared to be a genuine manuscript letter of the German poet Schiller. It was addressed to his sister, and all in his handwriting. And yet it looked a trifle suspicious. Despite the appearance of age it had a little the air of a facsimile. But my friend thought it might be an original letter—it had been given to him as a valued possession. Now I am no Schiller scholar. I painfully waded through *Wilhelm Tell* in college, and once, even more painfully, conducted a class through *Die Jungfrau von Orleans*. I had never heard of Fritz Jonas's celebrated edition of Schiller's correspondence. But I did know where the Schiller books were, and that there was among them a set of volumes of letters. In three minutes I went to the place, found the authoritative-looking set, picked out the year and day of the letter, and discovered a footnote to the effect that some one had caused an admirable facsimile of this letter to

be lithographed and that efforts were constantly being made to sell it as an original.

Now, this incident will bear analysis. It is typical of much that goes on in our service. The query was not simple. But the means of answering it to the entire satisfaction of the inquirer were really primitive. They consisted merely in a knowledge that there was once a German poet named Schiller, that he had a place in our classification, that his books were shelved in a certain part of our stacks, and that, as a rule, editors arrange correspondence in chronological order. I knew no more about German poetry, or Schiller, or Schiller's letters, when the transaction was over than when it began. But my friend—who is a man of much learning and—I may be pardoned for saying it—one of our foremost scientists, seems firmly convinced that I can find him anything in German literature which he wishes to know. You see on how slight a foundation of real knowledge one can and does perform his daily duties. The backs of books! How they help us! How well do little matters of shape, size, color, location, impress themselves indelibly upon us and aid us to earn our living!

But precisely this facility in helping people to find things has too often a most unwholesome influence on the librarian's attitude toward the world of knowledge. It can not but tend to render him

neglectful of that real and sound study hich alone gives fibre and substance to his mind. The numbing force of inertia must be reckoned with. We are all busy—too busy. We move along the lines of least resistance. We content ourselves with knowing the backs of our books, with a familiarity with labels and groupings in lieu of ideas. Too soon *you* are likely to discover that executive work absorbs the greater part of your powers. Too soon the habit of doing pretty well in your work without much reading and study becomes fixed. If you can recall titles easily, can locate desired information quickly, can send a reader to this or that place where his books are to be found, and meantime keep an eye on the needs of half a score of others, you begin unconsciously to think well of yourself and to ignore the fact that man does not live by bread alone.

The wisest man I have ever been privileged to know once said to me: "You can be very useful. You can help a great many people. You can perhaps do a great work. *But*, if you stay in library work, your mind will be an intellectual rag-bag after ten years."

What is the remedy? Are we to be content with this "bowing acquaintance," as Emerson called it, with the books on our shelves? Are we to be satisfied with bright and parti-colored scraps of information, mental confetti? Are we as librarians, what-

ever our own special branch of library work, to incur the just reproach of real ignorance of our wares? Is there any way we may escape the consequences of our calling, our undue outward familiarity with masses of books?

It is, of course, impossible, even if it were wise, in this day of large libraries to recommend an effort to know the insides of all the books, or even of the better books, in our collections. They are too many even for the most indefatigable reader, to say nothing of the busy librarian. It is equally unwise to urge you to neglect the knowledge of titles and of classification, of the backs of your books. Cultivate that by all means. It means bread and butter, whatever your particular function in a library. But by all means keep yourselves "sweet," as our fathers used to say, by some intensive work which involves study. I have the greatest respect for the man with a hobby—even if he proves a nuisance at times. Without a hobby life is not worth living. You should have one—a real hobby which becomes vastly more important to you than any mere business can be. I would not prescribe the kind of hobby a librarian should ride. My advice, or any one's else for that matter, would be unavailing. A hobby cometh not with understanding, any more than falling in love. But it is sometimes as happy a possession as a true help-meet, and occasionally as

disastrous as an unfortunate marriage. A hobby which will refresh in your hours of weariness, attract when you are lazy, and inspire when you are worn, is precious beyond words.

But a hobby, whether golf, or gardening, or bird-study, or collecting china, or any other like expensive and joyous pastime, is not enough to pull a busy librarian from the slough of inertia as regards books. Indeed, it may tend to keep him there, the more if he wisely takes to some sane supreme interest—out of doors. A line of study which is peculiarly your own will do more for you than you can possibly know at this stage of your careers. A small specialty which you have cultivated to the point where you know with almost complete fullness the literature of the topic is worth vastly more to you than the mere knowledge you acquire in it. The very fact of intensive study of a small topic keeps you in touch with methods and men, and is an admirable corrective to the scattering tendencies of our calling. I know a librarian who started in years ago reading everything he could on our Civil War. He kept it up amid purely executive duties until even specialists in military history now come to him for aid, and the government itself seeks his advice in matters of historical accuracy. He is concerned with the purely business side of a great library, but his extensive knowledge produced by steady reading has kept

him in touch with the world of letters in a very vital way. The best man I know in matters economic and statistical knows also (purely as a side issue) more about English poetry, particularly the minor poets, than any professor of English I ever knew. And he is an active librarian, a graduate of a library school, and an "alumnus" of The New York Public Library.

No librarian need despair, if only he sets inflexibly this goal before him, of attaining to productive scholarship. We recall Justin Winsor, who administered in able fashion two great libraries, and yet edited the *Narrative and Critical History*, to say nothing of other books; Dr. J. K. Hosmer whose array of volumes in English and American History is more than the product of mere industry, and whose *Color Guard* and *Thinking Bayonet* pulsate with the great struggle of the sixties; Reuben Gold Thwaites whose monument will be the *Jesuit Relations* rather than the Wisconsin Historical Society's library; Dr. Poole who will live in his *Index* long after his other library labors at Yale, Cincinnati and Chicago are forgotten; and last, and greatest of all, Dr. John Shaw Billings, soldier, physician, author, director of great enterprises, yet a librarian who built up by incessant labor the greatest specialized library in the world, and then at an age when most men seek retirement, with unmatched patience, wisdom and

zeal wrought The New York Public Library into an organic whole and housed it in this resplendent palace. With these men in mind—and others whom time fails me to mention—who of us shall be content with mere skill in technique, with mere facility of movement among printed things, with mere knowledge of the backs of books?

I said I should probably fall into the habit of the preacher. Full well do I remember that professors of homiletics always urge that the sermon close with an "application." Perhaps some of you are saying—"I am not to go into reference work. I am to be a cataloger, or to have charge of a branch library, or to aid in library extension. These warnings are not for me." But they are for you, and for every one of us librarians. Whatever our peculiar part in library work, we can not escape the inevitable tendency to treat books as the mere vehicle on which we exercise our skill; we can not fail to gain a certain superficial exterior acquaintance with them. The longer we know and live with the backs of books, the more we shall need the tonic which comes from our own special line of research. Ordinarily, specialists grow narrow, but deep; librarians too often grow broad, but shallow. Begin now, therefore, when you are starting in to practice your profession, to cultivate intensively some one field. Hold to it as the years go by. Dig deeply and wisely into the

accumulated store of wisdom which the ages have deposited in your little area. And give the world the ripened fruit you have grown. Thus will you give the lie to Mark Pattison's often misapplied dictum: "The librarian who reads is lost."

THE VATICAN LIBRARY: SOME NOTES BY A STUDENT[1]

No other library has the associations, the history or the value of the famous collection of the Vatican. To no other spot do the longings of classical and historical scholars, of librarians, and of palæographers go out as to that secluded and long forbidden reading-room in the east arm of the palace of the Popes. We are accustomed to remember Tischendorf and his hasty notes made on cuffs and thumbnails of readings of the chief treasure of that storehouse of treasures, Codex B of the Old and New Testaments. Cardinal Mai and his mysterious "*codices vaticani*," whereof he alone knew the number and the worth, and a host of Catholic apologists with the archives at command have given an impression of mysteriousness, of buried treasure, which remains long after the enlightened liberality of the present pontiff has thrown open to the learned world the Vatican collections with as free a hand as have the guardians of any library of the sort in Europe. Nor are the aspirations of the scholar lessened by the tales of his brethren; and even the disappointed and disgruntled tourists—"trippers" they call them

[1] *Library Journal*, March, 1900.

in Rome—spur him on with accounts of the few manuscripts which they have seen under glass in the grand halls and galleries through which they are shown, under the delusion that they are seeing the "library."

The doors of the plain cupboards under the brilliantly frescoed walls shut from the tourist's sight the thousands of parchment and paper manuscripts which compose the library. The Vatican collections are divided into the archives, the printed books, and the manuscripts. It is with the last of these alone that we have to do in this paper, although it should be said that the other departments are as freely opened to those with proper credentials as that of the manuscripts.

To secure the privilege of the manuscript reading-room one has simply to come armed with proof that he is a person prepared to make use of the valuable documents in a proper way. With the introduction of the consul, or with other credentials, Americans have no difficulty in securing admission. Fortunately for the writer he was a member of the American School of Classical Studies in Rome; which fact insured a hearty welcome, for the Vatican authorities have been exceedingly kind in extending all possible courtesies to the School. During an almost constant attendance of some months I heard of no one who was refused the privileges of the library, and, in fact, I

was frequently astonished at the extreme liberality of the management.

It is a more difficult task to secure physical admission than the written permission. Guards in various gaudy and somber uniforms bar the way with a polite but firm demand to know your business there. The words "Biblioteca," or "Padre Ehrle" generally secure an instant salute and a polite direction. To a newcomer it is no easy task to make his way up staircases, across courts, and through galleries to the black, nail-studded door which bears a card requesting him not to enter but apply to another door in the garden for admission. If his Italian has carried him so far, however, he probably has courage enough left to believe that this sign is for the thousands of tourists who throng this gallery several times a week on their way to the Appartamenti Borgia, and pushes on. Once inside, a polite and deferential porter receives his hat and cane. He generally keeps on his outer coat, if he is wise, for to the northerner these enormous palaces of Italy are damp and dangerous. And as he has climbed over 160 steps from the Piazza San Pietro he is usually so warm that he fears the chill of an unheated room.

The vestibule to the reading-room in older times was the reading-room itself. Two dark wooden counters down the sides, flanked by equally dark

and tightly closed bookcases or lockers, create a gloom which the one window would not much relieve were it not for the numerous portraits of former cardinal librarians which deck the walls of vestibule and reading-room. By this window is generally seated a woman at work on some manuscript, for women are not admitted to the sacred precincts of the reading-room itself. In return, however, for this treatment the feminine student gets the best light in the place. It will interest Americans to know that the wife of one of our best-known librarians was the second woman to secure the privilege of studying the Vatican manuscripts.

The reading-room, which is entered through green baize doors, is a rectangle, nearly twice as long as it is broad, high, of course, and lighted by two large windows on the north side. Between them Father Ehrle, S.J., the justly famous guardian of these treasures, has his desk. In the long cassock and black biretta of his order he presides with kindly interest over the readers. Apparently he speaks with ease all the languages of modern Europe, and his courtesy and good humor seem unfailing. Parellel to the shorter side of the room are four long tables, each with 12 chairs and racks for manuscripts. Across the end of the room opposite the entrance is a raised platform with seats upholstered in red. These are intended, I suppose, for the officials, for I saw

using them only priests and two of the so-called *scriptores* of the library. All the furniture is of plain dark wood. On the east side opposite the windows are ranged the ponderous tomes of the inventory and catalogs. Near the door is a small counter, behind which an attendant sits to receive the applications for manuscripts and to keep the tallies. He has one or two assistants who bring the documents to him.

The library consists, as is well known, of about 26,000 manuscripts, divided roughly by languages into 19,000 Latin, 4000 Greek, and 2000 Oriental. These figures do not include the archives nor the library of some 100,000 printed volumes kept on a lower story. In this sum-total are included, however, the various smaller collections as well as those known simply as *codices vaticani*. There is an inventory which describes every numbered manuscript, but the great catalogs (in manuscript) are exceedingly defective. The catalog of Greek manuscripts, for example, was made over a century ago, and a short use of it soon drove me to the inventory. The smaller collections have been cataloged, and these catalogs have been well printed, although since the Palatine manuscripts which were returned to Heidelberg have been described in the Palatine catalog without separation or discriminating marks in the index, one is occasionally caught asking for one

of these absentees. It is also delightful, even somewhat uncanny, to receive back your slip, as I once did, marked in blue pencil, "manca del 1682,"—"*missing since* 1682." Accordingly if one wishes to be certain that he has seen all the manuscripts of a certain author in the Vatican, he must search laboriously through the inventory. Some unlucky chap may generally be seen at this task. A friend of mine spent three weeks and a half looking through the inventory of Latin manuscripts in search of a complete list of manuscripts of Pliny's Letters, to be rewarded with two not previously published. Prof. Wm. G. Hale four years ago discovered a new manuscript of Catullus in the same way.

The prospective reader takes his papers to Father Ehrle, and is by him required to write his name and address in a book, together with the particular subject he wishes to investigate. He then discovers the number of his manuscript and fills out in duplicate an application blank, of half of which a reduced copy is printed on page 21.

The attendant—who must in some cases walk nearly a quarter of a mile in making the trip to and fro—brings him his manuscript. At the time he leaves, a receipt in duplicate is made out at the bottom of the same slip, of which one copy is retained by the library and one by the reader. In case he wishes to consult the same manuscript the

next day, it is retained for him at the desk. Before leaving the room he must obtain a ticket to show to the porter. This is given him by the man who receipts for the manuscript, and so equal justice is done to both librarian and reader. I ought to add that the attendants are exceedingly courteous, prompt, and obliging. In no other library anywhere have I met with more hearty, prompt—considering the distances—and polite service. It seldom takes more than 10 minutes to secure a manuscript after the slip has been made out—and none are so near the desk as the remoter books in any ordinary library, while many are at great distances.

Biblioteca Vaticana.

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Li 18

Per il Prefetto

[*Signature*]

The readers would afford an inviting study to an artist. All nations of Europe seem represented. When the German universities have their recess between semesters in the spring the place is full. One may see half a dozen or more black cassocks, the high hat of the Greek priest, and a collection of beards and costumes such as can be gathered only in Rome. Occasionally a famous editor or professor is pointed out by some German student, and there are always at hand the men who do hack work at transcribing or collating. Yet one may work for days beside a man and know nothing of him until later he sees in print the work which his neighbor has done. In midwinter and late spring the room is only half full. Many readers come so frequently that their little peculiarities become well known to the habitués. The most entertaining was a little old gentleman who used to go to sleep regularly and then wake up when he snored.

It is exasperating to a librarian to see the careless manner in which many of the readers handle the manuscripts. They are generally bound in full morocco, russia, or pigskin, and very solidly bound, too, so that they will stand some rough usage. But it is almost incredible that ink should be used so carelessly over and near the manuscripts. Of course care is taken to allow only well-known scholars to use the rarest manuscripts, and some are simply

not to be had, as is only right, because of their fragility. The amount of noise which a few men make in the room is also a source of annoyance to a librarian. But even noise is better than the signs proclaiming silence displayed in some of our own libraries.

The reading-room is closed on Sundays, of course, and on Thursdays also, as well as on numerous saints' days. Between the end of June and the middle of October it is not open at all. The hours are from nine to one in the fall and winter, and from eight to twelve in spring. These seem short hours, but when one has put in four hours over a crabbed Irish, Saxon or Visigothic handwriting, or worse still, on a 15th century Greek theological work, he is glad of an excuse to stop. And on departing, if he is wise, he first goes to the window of the long gallery and looks north to see if perchance

"alta stet nive candidum Soracte,"

as old Horace has it; and if that good luck befall him not, he gazes across the city on the Sabines with Monte Gennaro towering over all. Then he slowly passes down the long gallery, where 6000 inscriptions invite him to linger, and here he reads a pompous epitaph or two, with about as much truth in them probably as epitaphs generally possess, or learns how the *custode* of the column of Marcus Aurelius

got a permit to build him a house with government timber, or possibly he meditates on the simple words *in pace* on the memorial slab of some humble Christian, until even this longest of galleries comes to an end, and the sunshine of the Damascene court brings him back to modern Rome and a consciousness of lunch-time.

THE VATICAN LIBRARY: TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER[1]

Old frequenters of the Eternal City are fond of decrying the changes which the needs of the modern capital of Italy have brought in their favorite haunts. The ancient and picturesque rambling town has become an ugly and noisy city, they will tell you, and its former quiet charm has vanished. Changes there have been in plenty, if not progress, and even the *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* has not escaped.

But the changes at the Vatican Library seem wholly desirable and happy. Begun by Father Ehrle before he was raised to the cardinalate and finished by the present Pope while still he was Monsignore Ratti, these improvements have made the Vatican one of the most comfortable and convenient workshops for scholars to be found anywhere. The printed books and the manuscripts have been brought close together, so that access to one brings with it convenient approach to the other. The new reading room for manuscripts is light, well-ventilated and eminently comfortable. The manuscripts themselves are brought to it by electric book-lifts, being housed directly beneath the reading room

[1] April, 1924.

itself, thus rendering the time lost in getting a manuscript a negligible quantity. The service is prompt and most courteous. This is no change in spirit, but a vast change in the means of service.

The approach to the Library is now from the west side, not far from the entrance to the Picture Gallery. One may still come in, if furnished with a pass, through the Court of Damasus, thus avoiding the long journey around St. Peter's. But most readers ride to the Library and walk away, for the chill of the Vatican itself has grown no less with the years. There is an amusing routine—I had almost said ritual—of entrance. Furnished, after proper introduction as of old, with a permit bearing a passport photograph, the intending reader signs his name in a register, noting the hour of entry and the subject of his study. The line on which he writes bears a number. He then turns in his permit to the guard who gives him in return a key bearing the same number. Entering and crossing a pleasant court the reader arrives in an ante-room where he discovers that his key opens a locker in which he may leave his hat and coat and lock them up in safety. Then he passes through the library of printed books to the manuscript reading rooms, where he turns in the key with his written request for a manuscript, receiving it back once more when he turns in the manuscript at the end of his stay.

He then reverses the process and finally after noting the hour and minute of his departure he exchanges the key for his permit, which allows him to take the short cut back to the Piazza di San Pietro, if he wishes to go that way. It is a rather amusing process, but most sensible and really very just to both the Library and the reader.

The printed books—on open shelves—have been collected with the aim of aiding research in the manuscripts. They are well arranged and admirably cataloged. One may bring to his table in the reading room for manuscripts as many printed books as he needs, and may keep them some days if he desires. There is the minimum of formality and the maximum of helpfulness. The catalogs are progressing—the first volume of a new series of the Greek manuscripts has just been issued.

Altogether, the Vatican Library is as good a place to work as any known to me so far as conveniences go—and it is the greatest storehouse of mediaeval book manuscripts in the world. Its guardians have deserved well of the republic of letters. Following the liberal policy of Leo XIII they have not only opened its treasures to scholars with entire freedom, but they have done everything possible to make their work easy and rapid. It should perhaps be noted as not the least of the changes of a quarter century that women are no longer relegated to the ante-room, but now have the same privileges as men.

BOOK-HUNTING IN ROME[1]

The chief book marts of Europe are an old story to veteran collectors. In London, Paris, Berlin, Leipzig they have their favorite haunts or trusted agents. Pleasant memories of hours in quaint and and musty stalls, in bright and business-like shops, and in gloomy and cavernous storehouses recur as one of them names these cities, or fondles the treasures acquired in each. And to the younger amateur whose experiences have not led him as yet into these happy hunting-grounds of his chosen pastime, the peculiarities of the great centres, the names of the great dealers, and the possible results of searches in the minor shops have become well-worn and familiar themes.

Rome and the other Italian cities are not so well known as fields for the harvest of old and rare books. And truly they have been stripped sadly of their treasures by greedy agents and skilful collectors. One can still glean here after the reapers to no small advantage, however, despite the ravages of the spoilers of Italy in this as in many more important matters. There are three or four firms in Rome, mostly Germans, whose catalogs find their way

[1] From *The Bookman*, January, 1901.

even to America, and they control, of course, the best things in the local market. With them dealers and bibliophiles are familiar, and I do not propose to exploit their wares. It is of opportunities for the individual book-hunter, especially for him of limited purse and unlimited zeal, that I propose to write. Nor do I wish to go into the matter of auctions, which in Rome, as generally elsewhere, result from the death of some collector or dealer. It is enough to say that there are a few each year, and that important sales are heralded widely and attended by agents of all the important European houses.

There is no particular quarter in Rome where the booksellers congregate. There are more of them in in the crowded district between the Corso and the Tiber, south of the Via dei Pontifici and north of the Corso Vittorio Emmanuele than anywhere else, although they are to be found between the Corso and the Quirinal, on the Via Nazionale, and even on the Esquiline. One runs on them in the most unexpected places, and they range from the large and well-appointed collections of the German firms to a few dozen books strung along the sunny side of a church. And none of them is to be despised, for one never knows what may turn up in them. I purchased a very early Giunta out of a basket of popular songs and dream books in a sunny corner

once, while a friend of mine one day picked up the life of the first Bishop of Connecticut from a similar heap alongside the Church of St. Andrea delle Frate.

One of the sights of Rome is the market or fair, sometimes dubbed "rag fair" by tourists, which takes place every Wednesday in the Campo di Fiori. Here, where Bruno was burned and where his bronze statue now stands, are gathered vendors of every imaginable article, not omitting books. The smaller dealers send a cart-load of books to the fair on Wednesdays, and many a pawnbroker and rag picker adds his contribution to their more respectable wares. Books of every conceivable sort and value are displayed on rough tables and in carts, while a crowd jostles all day around them. One should have good care of his pocket-book and a gift for good-natured bargaining if he would buy at the Campo di Fiori, and to secure anything of value he must rise betimes, for the agents of the more important houses skim the cream of the market at its first opening.

The "fly-by-night"bookshop is not infrequently discovered. Some dealer in old junk, some purchaser of an estate, or some shrewd bookseller with a small income rents a store on a busy street for two or three weeks, attracts a crowd by posters and signs, sells out his stock and is gone before you have become accustomed to finding him there. Most of

of his wares are veritable trash, but if the hunter has the fortune to arrive soon after the place opens, he may make some finds. It is always wise to be on the lookout for these birds of passage.

Occasionally one comes across a small *bottega*, where a dealer displays such of his wares as he wishes to dispose of or thinks will sell, while a *magazzino* behind is carefully sealed from inquiring eyes. Chancing to enter such a place near the Chamber of Deputies one day I was ignominiously turned out of the back room, piled nearly to the ceiling with books. Nor could any representations or entreaties change the determination of the owner. "Signore, if you wish any of *these* books, buy; but no one enters my *magazzino*. Yes, you Americans are very practical, but it is my custom." Another time, however, a different excuse kept me from the storeroom. It was beneath a church, and the wares above tempted me to explore. But no. "The signore is without doubt an American, a heretic! A thousand pardons! He cannot come in here. The good fathers would turn me out forever." Then, confidentially, "Only tell me what you want, and I'll bring it out." And so he did; a very early edition of Josephus it was, too, well worth the trouble, to say nothing of the fun.

Perhaps the richest of all these shops to the inquisitive collector is a shabby corner near the Collegio Romano, where a large fat man and his short fat

wife keep a sort of clearing-house for old books. Where they buy them, no one can guess, but new stock constantly makes its appearance, is culled over, sold at a small price, and then the remnant goes for old paper. It is haunted, this shop, by priests, collectors and students, and the jovial proprietor seems to cater equally to the schoolboy who is looking for an arthmetic and to the lover of Aldines and old bindings. Such bargains as may occasionally be met here will tempt the book lover to take his afternoon walk pretty constantly in this direction.

I might run on indefinitely about these curious old shops, but what of their contents? Most of the books are the veriest trash, more discouraging to a book lover than any accumulations he ever saw in this land. But there is much to attract the student, the bibliophile, and any one interested in the history of printing and what I may call "commercial" binding. An Aldine is an Aldine, whether it be a first edition or no, and a Stephanus or Froben or Gryphus may be equally illustrative of the work of those houses, whether it be a most ordinary work or a famous rarity. It is some satisfaction to own a book printed in Italics, or in his famous Greek type, under the eye of the first Aldus himself, by his son at Rome, or by old Luca Antonino, the founder of the Giunta family. And it is a pleasure to get a few fifteenth-century works even if they are not

famous or remarkable. The clear-cut type, the firm, heavy paper, the ink, black as when the sheets were pulled from the press, of these fifteenth-century books make one heartily weary of pulp papers and inks that fade with the very printing.

Of the old books, strangely enough, works on canon law and the decretals seem to be the most numerous. Next come editions of the classics and hosts of sixteenth-century tractates of all shapes and sizes. Greek books are scarce, but Latin ones are too numerous to excite attention. Italian literature naturally holds the first place, with Cantu in a succession of voluminous editions most in evidence. French and Spanish books come next, while English and German ones are almost unknown except at one or two shops which make a specialty of them.

Of the early and famous printers, the Germans are but slightly represented, and the same thing is true of the Dutch and English presses. French and Swiss publishers divide the field with those of Italy. One exception should be made in favor of the Plantin Press, of Antwerp, examples of whose work are easily secured. The extraordinary number of the printing presses of Northern Italy, especially at Venice and Florence, before the baneful work of the Index and the Inquisition ruined publishers and authors, and stayed the flood of books, can best be

appreciated by the remnants of their work which still crowd the stalls and shops in Rome. Elzevirs seem not to have found their way south in large numbers, or possibly they have all been purchased and do not often get into the shops.

A word as to prices. They will vary most unaccountably with the shop, the temper of the dealer, and the linguistic ability of the purchaser, together with such indications of the length of his purse as the dealer can gather from the dress, equipage or manner of his customer. Such a thing as a fixed price exists in only one or two shops. A knowledge of Italian, and the ability to make ever so poor a joke will reduce the price in an extraordinary fashion, just as broken French and a hasty temper will increase it and hold it fast to its extravagant size. As a rule, fifteenth-century books of any sort cost from twenty-five to fifty francs, and if they are finely bound or in good condition the ultimate price will not be far from one hundred francs at the least. For later books it is all a matter of chance, of knowledge of their true value on the dealer's part, and of persistence on the purchaser's. He may get his treasure for a few coppers, or he may pay twice its value. He must *mercanteggiare*, "bargain," however much he may dislike to do so, unless he be a Crœsus or a fool.

In Rome one may revel in parchment bindings of

all sorts. Few other leathers have been used to any great extent. Much of the work is extremely plain, merely a half or full parchment binding with lettering in ink. Occasionally, however, a fine specimen of tooling will turn up; and if it does not bear the arms of some pope or cardinal it generally can be got cheaply enough. Books bound for the popes, with the tiara, keys and arms of the pontiff in gilding on the sides sell at round prices, but cardinals have been so much more common that their armorial bearings and cardinals' hats are not so highly rated, unless the work is inlaid in morocco. There are certain characteristics which very clearly distinguish the bindings of different epochs, and these soon become so familiar to the book-hunter that he passes over late works without inspecting them carefully, unless the paper betrays an old book in a later binding.

Not infrequently you may come across books in these stalls in which the name of the author or editor, of the publisher, and even of the place of printing, has been blotted or cut out. Occasionally the attempt has been a failure, and the poorer ink used to blot out the name has faded, leaving the printer's ink still visible. These names so ruthlessly concealed were those of heretics, generally Swiss or Germans. No one dared to expose these books for sale or to own them without this precaution, and probably

also the permission of the ecclesiastical authorities. I have books in which the names of Erasmus, Beatus Rhenanus, and the publisher Froben are so treated, and I have seen literally hundreds of others. In most cases the objectionable person was simply an editor or publisher. When he supplied the subject-matter also, his books were more summarily dealt with, as he would have been could he have been caught.

Rome, them, is by no means a wholly barren and despoiled field for the collector who loves to gather himself the books which he puts on his shelves. She may not yield to the wealthy collector of almost priceless rarities any returns for his pains in searching, but the more modest and humbler lover of old volumes will find the old city a rich and profitable source of pleasure.[2]

[2] The above was written in 1900. The change twenty-five years later is most marked. The Great War has ruthlessly swept away most of the small book-shops of Rome. The after-effects of the war were hard on small dealers everywhere, but book-dealers in particular, unless they had large capital, have simply gone to the wall in the Italian cities. Otherwise—with the inevitable change in prices—the description still fits, and the book-hunting traveller will find much to reward him in the shops of Rome.

SHOULD THE LIBRARIAN BE A BIBLIOPHILE?[1,2]

To state this question is almost the same thing as to answer it. A librarian who is not a lover of books is indeed a sorry specimen of his kind. But of late years the term bibliophile has gathered to itself certain associations which have somewhat obscured its real meaning; in the popular mind it is now generally applied only to those persons whose love for books has taken the form of a mania for works of a certain rarity or of a limited and strictly fictitious value. If the words collector and bibliophile are to be considered as interchangeable; if the bibliophile is to be thought of only as the man in whose eyes an uncut first edition in the original blue paper wrappers is worth ten times as much as the same book when it has delighted the eye of its owner and imparted its contents to his mind; if he alone is a bibliophile who is a bibliomaniac, then by all means librarians, as all other people of wholesome and well-balanced character should strive to guard themselves from bibliomania as from an insidious and dangerous disease.

[1] Read at a meeting of the Long Island Library Club, February 21, 1902.

[2] *Library Journal*, March, 1902.

But if by a bibliophile we mean one who truly loves books, in whose eyes a badly made book, a badly bound book, and a badly illustrated book are alike an abomination, one who loves a book not only for its form, but for its content, one who knows the history and technique of the art of printing, one whose books are his friends and companions, his inspiration and his solace, then by all means should the librarian be a bibliophile. And if we may read into the term, as without unduly stretching it I think we may, an idea of a man who values books because they contain the goodly heritage of past ages, because from them and from them alone we learn how to interpret that daily experience which our contact with human nature brings to each one of us, then indeed to become a bibliophile is not only an attainment to be desired, but a goal to be striven for.

My answer to this question might perhaps stop here. There are, however, certain considerations which induce me to continue the discussion further. I think few will deny that on the part of a great many of our American librarians there is a lack of equipment for work on the historical and artistic side of their calling. There may be good reasons for this state of things, but still I think, disregarding the reasons, that it is clear to anyone whose observation has been at all extended that here we have paid

but little attention to what I am disposed to call the higher and finer duties of our profession. There are too few of us who feel competent to attack problems involving a minute knowledge not alone of the history of book-making, but even of such allied subjects as the political and economic history of Europe in the Renaissance period. There are not many among our number who could lend intelligent aid, say to a historian seeking information on the Spanish colonies in the West Indies, from what few original sources our libraries might have. How many of us feel ourselves reasonably well fitted to draw up a scheme for the careful preservation and at the same time the ready consultation of manuscripts deposited with us? If a bundle of letters of General Washington, or some manuscript diaries of President Madison, or the account books of General Scott, or a set of letters describing life in Alaska in 1899 were brought to us, how many of us would feel competent to prepare them for publication and to arrange for their proper preservation? Supposing a collection of rare and beautiful Italian books of the fifteenth century should be given to the library, is there someone at hand able to collate them, to catalog them, to say nothing of publishing a description of them which would be a lamp to the feet of scholars the world over? Have we many librarians equipped to distinguish between a true and a counterfeit Aldine,

to describe the earmarks of "contemporary binding," or to tell with reasonable accuracy the date of a Greek or Latin manuscript at a glance?

Nay, more than these things, which may seem to some matters of rather remote possibility, have all our librarians the ability to tell good from poor paper, to distinguish between different grades of morocco and other leathers? Can we all tell how a book should be sewed and berate the binder when he fails, with the perversity of his kind, to follow directions? Do we know the difference between good printing and bad. Can we appreciate that proper registration, clear and beautiful type, and serviceable bindings are more truly artistic than the combination of heavy and ugly type poorly set, muddy ink, and imitation chamois skin binding which now beguiles the innocent purchaser of supposedly "artistic" books—sent him "on approval," without request? And lastly are there many of us who know intimately the history of the finer and more expensive sorts of book-making, who love the books into whose making has gone the devoted skill of artist and printer and binder?

That we have in the ranks of the librarian's calling not a few persons competent to do many of these things, and some able to do all of them—and vastly more—is undoubtedly true. But I fear that we we can hardly go on to say that the majority of

those engaged in library work have any such qualifications. We are all aware that the great development in library work in America has been along two lines, first, the betterment and growth of the free public circulating library, and second, an increase in the material ease of handling books and making them quickly accessible to the reader. The number and size of our free libraries, the enormous quantity of books circulated from them, the magnificent and well-planned buildings recently erected, the mechanical devices for protection against fire and for compact housing of books, the card catalog system, our convenient, if not altogether logical, systems of classification, together with a host of accessory aids to the promotion of reading and the circulation of books; these form at once the chief pride of our American librarians and their chief contribution to the science of librarianship. We have passed through a period of training in the last quarter century. Our energies have been given to the material side of our work, and we have no cause to be ashamed of our results. But we may well pause for an instant to inquire seriously whether we have done all that we might have done, and whether new conditions are not facing us at the present moment.

Those of us who are at all familiar with some of the great libraries of Europe are perfectly well aware that they as a rule are conducted on an altogether

different basis from most of our own. We are not a little disposed to ridicule the library in which the card catalog is unknown, or one in which a student must occasionally wait forty-eight hours after leaving a request for books before obtaining them. But true librarianship does not consist in standard sizes or pneumatic tubes. We have not been wrong in thinking that our collections must be made available by every device in our power; but we have not always had strong collections. When we contrast our best libraries with those of Europe, we are painfully aware of the fact that the European institutions have been in the field for some hundreds of years longer than we have. As a consequence, training for librarianship with them involves a study of palæography, for they have manuscript treasures; it involves a knowledge of the history of printing, for their collections exemplify that history; it involves learning and scholarship, for their libraries are the resort of scholars and of the leading men in all professions.

Now I think that we may safely say that with us the period of emphasis on the expansion of the circulating library only has come to an end. We shall not circulate fewer books, but more; we shall not have fewer branches and delivery stations, but more; we shall not cease from our missionary activities, on the contrary, we shall doubtless increase them

in ways undreamed of at present. But the very state where the belief in the civilizing mission of the book is strongest, the state whose Free Library Commission sends out reports of the work of its travelling libraries which can hardly be read without emotion, this state has just erected for its State Historical Society a magnificent building to shelter a collection of manuscripts and books which illuminate the early history of the entire northwest. In our own city,[3] soon to be provided as a result of Mr. Carnegie's generosity with unexcelled facilities for the circulation of books through free libraries, there are growing great collections of incunabula, of Americana, of works on architecture, not to mention a host of others. We need only glance at a few of the great libraries of the country from Boston to Washington and from New York to Chicago to see that the day of specialization, of more rounded collections, and of great reference libraries has truly dawned. We have reached a point where libraries are receiving endowments, and where a distinct purpose exists on the part of trustees to further research.

It may not be known to all of us to how remarkable an extent American collectors of wealth have been purchasing manuscripts, incunabula and rare books in Europe in the past two decades. In the natural

[3] New York.

course of things the greater part of these collections will in time find their way from private hands to the shelves of libraries. Witness the collections of Mr. Ayer and Mr. Brown in the field of Americana, as recent examples, to say nothing of a score of others. Within easy reach of a student in New York City it is now possible to find no small amount of first hand material for the study of both Greek and Latin palæography, while a great amount of material of this sort may be expected in the future. Papyri are already finding their way to America in large quantities, owing to American assistance in financing the recent explorations in Egypt.

If it is once granted that we have arrived at this new stage in library progress, I think it will scarcely be disputed that the bibliographic, the scholarly, the historical side of their work must in the future engage the careful attention of a far greater number of librarians than it has, with us, in the past. In libraries created for special purposes, or containing large collections on special topics, works illustrating the history of those subjects must be gathered in large quantities. These cannot properly be handled in any other spirit than that of the true bibliophile. While for bibliographic purposes the matters which lend an adventitious value to a book are scarcely worth noting, it yet remains true that one gifted with the knowledge and trained in the arts of the

bibliophile will alone succeed in cataloging and classifying books whose value lies in their rarity, in the peculiar circumstances of their manufacture, or in the form in which they are preserved. There are therefore likely to be greater inducements for librarians to qualify themselves properly to handle rare books, manuscripts, and illustrative material in the future than there have been in the past.

It would indeed be a sad day which should find our library world divided into two camps. If those who serve a limited public and those who serve the greater masses should fail to recognize their mutual obligations and their mutual dependence, much would disappear which now goes to make pleasant and profitable the work of the profession. To recognize distinctly and to appreciate fully the missionary effort of the public library are required equally of all of us. May we not find in the spirit of the bibliophile one of the bonds which shall hold firmly together the members of our calling now rapidly differentiating to such a degree that we are obliged to flock by ourselves in a yearly increasing number of sections? May we not properly and confidently ask of our brethren of the public library, of the branch library, and of the delivery station, that they shall love the beautiful in books, that they shall care for the fine samples of early printing, and that they shall strive to educate their immediate constituents to some

appreciation of these things? And may we not bid the cataloger or classifier deep in the problems of transliteration from the Slavic or the proper subordination of a special class under the general heading turn for a while from his labor and consider the beauty of the fine old Baskerville he has just put down? May we not confidently urge that the historical side of bibliography and the deliberate formation of collections which shall show the history of at least one subject be encouraged in every library of any size?

There are some very practical applications to be made of these theoretical views. The busy desk attendant or children's librarian may think that these remarks are not meant for her. I think otherwise. It is in just these cases that they do apply. I do not mean that a long line of waiting applicants should be delayed while the desk attendant delivers a lecture on the superiority of morocco over sheep in bindings, or that bibliographic treasures should be turned over to children. But the "trivial round and common task" when steadfastly pursued are likely to result in both exhaustion and stagnation. A fine enthusiasm for old books, for fine books, for beautiful books, will be one stimulus which can generally be indulged in with ease and with safety. Moreover, I firmly believe that only those who have tried it know what an interest a bibliographic exhibit

may arouse among the frequenters even of a small branch library. Such exhibitions are not impossible, yet they require some little knowledge on the part of the attendants who explain them even when labelled in the most effective fashion.

Librarians who have charge of small collections and whose funds are limited have especial need of the training and the enthusiasm of the bibliophile. They are far too prone to believe that they can indulge in nothing so expensive as fine editions and good bindings. To any one who knows the possibilities of the auction and second-hand market of this city such beliefs are groundless. A succession of reasonably low bids placed with reliable auctioneers will produce results which will astonish those who have bought only of agents. Moreover no one knows how much good a few well bound books of fine quality will do. Few people will abuse a fine book, while almost anyone is careless with a paper-covered and poorly printed one. A librarian of a small library who will investigate second-hand stores and will persistently study auction catalogs can soon acquire book treasures.

In addition we may, it seems to me, make much more of such fine specimens of the printer's art or other treasures as we possess in all our libraries. I am a firm believer in the value of such things when exhibited with suitable explanatory labels. I well

remember the effect of on my own imagination of a few huddled and carelessly labelled old books and manuscripts placed in a show case in a wretched light in the public library I frequented as a boy. Had they been shown in an attractive manner and with full, clear, and elementary notes, I have no doubt that they would have had a vastly greater influence. It is hardly possible to lay too much stress on effective explanation in such matters. If our heads of libraries will endeavor to show what they have of beautiful, rare, and costly volumes and bindings, and will at the same time encourage on the part of their assistants a devotion to the beautiful in books, we shall all of us have taken a long step forward in the direction of a larger and truer librarianship.

A DECADE OF LIBRARY PROGRESS IN AMERICA[1]

Among the many gatherings of specialists which were held in connection with the Chicago Exposition in 1893 was an International Congress of Librarians. The account of its sessions appeared, in the usual belated manner of government publications, in the Report of the Commissioner of Education some three years later. The American Library Association has just held another similar international congress for the St. Louis Fair. It seems a fitting time, in view of this event, to set forth as well as may be in brief compass the events which have made the ten years which have elapsed since the World's Fair at Chicago a memorable decade in the history of American libraries.

It was a saying of President Garfield's that American education runs too much to bricks and mortar. A biting sting of truth lies in these words, truth which applies but too well to the library world in common with that of education. It is perhaps a national failing to exalt the visible and tangible, and to ignore the subtle and unseen work of culture and study. Undoubtedly the average man will turn

[1] *Popular Science Monthly*, December, 1904 (vol. 66, 131–138).

to the new buildings which have been reared in this decade for his criterion of progress in library affairs. They form, it must be said, a notable addition to the list of public buildings of merit in the country.

Perhaps it is not too much to say that the modern American library is a new architectural type. Conditions peculiarly our own, many of them the direct result of American innovations in planning library work, have produced a kind of building which is in many respects novel. The college gymnasium and the large library in the hands of our architects have become almost as markedly American forms of building as the sky-scraper and the grain elevator. The demands of the librarian for natural light throughout the structure, for compact storage and at the same time for instant accessibility of his books, for protection from fire and damp, joined with the need of supplying plenty of space for readers, for administration and for those who throng the corridors and desks where books are given out and returned, have resulted in some extremely interesting and beautiful buildings. More and more architects are studying the needs of libraries, and mistakes once made and realized are seldom repeated.

The small library also has furnished in the past decade numerous opportunities for the designer. Aside from the benefactions of Mr. Carnegie, which are in some respects the most striking event of the

past ten years, literally scores of small buildings have been erected by private individuals and by towns. These are coming to form an architectural type fully as distinct as the large buildings. As a rule, of late years these smaller library buildings have taken the shape of a rectangular structure with a central hall, two large front rooms, a delivery desk across the hall and shelves in "stacks" in the rear on the main floor. A second story usually provides space for additional study and administration rooms. A very large number of memorial libraries of this general type have been erected, particularly in New England. Numerous local and individual variations occur, but a building designed to shelve some ten thousand books so as to be easily reached by any visitor and to afford one attendant a fair view of the main floor has become the accepted type of the small library.

In 1893 there were but three examples of modern library buildings of a size much above the ordinary to be seen in America. These were the Boston Public Library, the Library of Cornell University and the Newberry Library of Chicago. All these are dignified and imposing structures, while the Boston edifice is distinctly one of the foremost public buildings of the country. No one of these buildings has ever satisfied librarians as an ideal, despite their abundant merits. In the past decade a round dozen

structures have been reared, which undoubtedly rank as of the first order for size and cost. They are the Library of Congress, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, the Public Libraries of Chicago, Milwaukee, Providence, Newark and the District of Columbia, and the libraries of Columbia, Princeton, New York and Illinois Universities, together with that of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Each of these buildings is in itself a notable production; as a group they form a striking testimony to the extent and vitality of the library "movement" in this country. None of them is without individuality. The reading room of the Library of Congress, the rotunda and impressive south façade of the Columbia Library, the Hall of Fame at the rear of the New York University Library, are characteristic features known to all readers of the illustrated papers. The others offer even more interesting and valuable returns to the student of our architecture and of library problems. The university libraries and that of the Wisconsin Historical Society in particular will repay the most careful examination.[2]

It has been a decade of building, and the end is not yet. The New York Public Library's building now in process of erection is but the largest of scores

[2] It is an interesting commentary on the growth of libraries that most of these buildings are already (1925) so crowded as to be nearly or wholly outgrown.

either planned or under way. For most of this expansion Mr. Carnegie is responsible. There seems to be no limit to his generosity, and with very few exceptions, the money he has given to libraries has gone into buildings. Mr. Carnegie is a firm believer in the doctrine that the public should support the public library, and he has regularly stipulated that 10 per cent of the amount which he gives for a building should be pledged by the community as an annual appropriation for maintenance. His gifts have gone both to cities already possessing libraries great and small, and to others where libraries must needs be organized to take advantage of his gifts. Exactly what the results of his munificence, aside from the buildings, will prove, it is too early to say. There seems to be very little likelihood of any but good consequences resulting from his wholesale giving.

So much for the "bricks and mortar." On the side of library science substantial progress has been achieved. The spirit of coöperation between libraries was never so strong as at present. That spirit which produced *Poole's Index* has resulted in the current indexing of over two hundred serials of a technical sort in addition to a continuation of this earlier work on the more popular magazines. Far more important than any other feature of the decade has been the adoption of uniform rules for cataloging

by many of the libraries of the country, for the purpose of securing printed catalog cards from a central bureau. The master minds among librarians since the middle of the nineteenth century have been urging that it was folly for each individual library to reproduce for itself, after the fashion of the middle ages, manuscript catalog entries for current printed books. A printed book should be cataloged on a printed card which could be bought either with, or at the same time as, the book. So ran the preaching of the idealists. The American Library Association for a time endeavored to do this through its publishing board; later a commercial organization took the work from the hands of the association and continued it for a short time. Both finally dropped the scheme as financially unprofitable. It was reserved for the Library of Congress to take the first effective step toward emancipating the library profession from the ancient bondage of the scribe. First by a series of compromises the libraries of the country, through a committee of their association, adopted a new set of rules for cataloging. Then the Library of Congress announced that it was ready to sell the printed cards which it makes for copyright books, its other accessions, and such books as it re-catalogs, at the regular price of government publications, *i.e.*, the cost plus ten per cent. This is now being done with great benefit to all concerned.

The result has undoubtedly been disappointing to some enthusiasts who had confidently expected that henceforth their catalogs would make themselves. But while the labor of cataloging has by no means been completely eliminated, the result attained by the use of this printed card is a far finer, fuller and more perfect card index than any one library could ordinarily afford to make, and that at a cost much less than that of manuscript cards. There is every reason to look forward not alone to a great extension of the present work of supplying printed cards to scholars, bibliographers and libraries, but also to an extension of the scheme in the direction of international exchange or purchase of printed catalog cards. The beginnings of such a movement are to be seen in the bibliographical labors of the Institut International of Brussels and the Concilium Bibliographicum of Zürich, while the International Catalogue of Scientific Literature for which the Royal Society of London is sponsor is another great step toward international coöperative cataloging.

Bibliography has received a great impetus in the past decade in America. Among other signs is the inevitable one of an organization. Americans, said Agassiz, when they have anything to do, must have a president, vice-presidents, secretary, treasurer and a constitution. The genial Swiss was right.

The Bibliographical Society of Chicago is about to become the American Bibliographical Society. Meantime private and corporate activity has produced some noteworthy bibliographies, of which The American Library Association's *Guide to the Literature of American History*, Mr. Evans's *American Bibliography*, the *United States Catalogue of Books in Print* and the *American Catalogue* are perhaps the most remarkable. The list might be indefinitely extended. Bibliography, whether seen in the form of the scholarly treatise, such as the catalog of the Dante collection of Cornell University, or in that of the latest reading list for children, has become a distinct feature of library progress in America.

There has been no small amount of legislation affecting libraries in the period we are considering. This has taken, as a rule, two directions, first, that of laws creating or amending a general act providing for the establishment of libraries, and second, laws establishing library commissions in the several states. The latter feature is the most prominent in the history of the relation of the state to libraries. In 1893 Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Connecticut alone possessed these boards. Now twenty states have established them by statute. Generally these commissions are composed of certain state officials *ex officio* (usually the librarian of the state library and the state superintendent of public in-

struction) and certain public-spirited citizens who serve without pay. They have a modest sum to be expended in employing inspectors and organizers. In general their work has been limited to helpful suggestion to the libraries of their states, and to the administration of a system of traveling libraries, another new development of the decade. In certain states the commission is empowered to render some small financial support from state funds to public libraries. The Wisconsin commission has furnished the model which has generally been followed in the west, while the Massachusetts commission has been the type for the eastern states. The western commissions have had somewhat more legal authority as well as larger sums to expend, and have usually employed more officers than have those in the east. The future will doubtless see an extension of this benevolent state supervision and help. It must be confessed that no other influence has been so potent in the improvement of the condition and administration of the smaller and more backward libraries as these commissions. They have fully justified their right to exist. They have also furthered to a remarkable extent the creation of new libraries in communities not previously possessing them. "Traveling libraries," small collections of some fifty books, have been called into being and managed largely through the commissions. These small collections

are sent to rural communities, and even to places in large cities where they are desired, are kept for a few weeks and exchanged for another set. They have commended themselves most highly to those interested in bringing books to people who have few or none.

This leads us naturally to a consideration of what may be termed the missionary spirit in library work. It may be remarked in passing that this seems a peculiarly American development, and that in general a growing consciousness of the possibilities a high and useful service in the life of the municipality has been one of the conspicuous features of the public library movement. The librarian who regards himself as a missionary of the book has been much in evidence of late, and on the whole has been both efficient and sane. The idea that he is custodian of books merely has ceased in large measure to be the librarian's conception of his office. He is rather a guide and helper to the use of books. "The best that can be said for any book in this library," said an enthusiastic leader in this sort of work, "is that it is entirely worn out, and we must buy two new copies of it." This was in answer to the faint protest of an elder librarian to the effect that children should not be allowed in libraries because they wore out the books by reading them so much. This zeal for helping others to books, to the right books, has

resulted in many reforms in the internal arrangement of library buildings and in the relations of the administration to the public. As a rule, the newer libraries are allowing a great amount of freedom in direct access to the shelves on the part of all users of the library. Many of the more recent buildings have been planned so that the visitor may go directly to the shelves, and many of the older buildings have been remodeled to permit this practise. In almost every way this has been a gain. There has come with it no small loss of books, but that loss is insignificant in view of the greatly increased use of the libraries which has resulted from easy personal contact with books. Most libraries in the future will undoubtedly be planned to permit direct access to open shelves for a great part of their collections. There is, however, a point where this privilege ceases to be of use to the public and to the library, and this fact is now very generally recognized.

Open shelves are but one manifestation of the missionary spirit. Special rooms for children in charge of specially trained assistants are another result of this desire to bring books and people together. The creation of "children's rooms" has been on the whole a great blessing to libraries. It has drawn away the younger children from the reading rooms and delivery counters, and has perhaps ingrained the reading habit in very many little ones. Certainly

the children's room with its cheerful and prettily decorated walls, its low tables and chairs and its tactful, kind, experienced director has proved a boon to countless children into whose homes none of these delectable things enter. This particular form of library work, is, however, as yet too young to enable us to judge of its ultimate results.

Another form which the missionary spirit has taken is a closer relation and a more effective co-operation between libraries and schools. The desire for an organization to give opportunity for the public exploitation of this sort of work produced in 1896 the Library Section of the National Educational Association. Not the schools alone, but women's clubs and social settlements, and, in general, all organizations whose members use books in their work, have been brought into friendly relations with the progressive libraries. In short we may safely affirm that public libraries are studying the needs of their communities as never before, and that the somewhat vague notion of aiding the "public" is fast being replaced by concrete and tangible assistance to organizations and individuals.

The libraries in the large cities have been showing a most decided desire to assist their clients in securing books. To this end the branch library and the delivery station have experienced an almost marvelous development in the past decade. There is

hardly a public circulating library of prominence in the country which does not maintain from half a dozen to half a hundred reading-rooms with small collections of reference books, as well as numerous stations for delivery of books from the central library. The largest number of these branch libraries will ultimately be found in New York, where Mr. Carnegie's gifts provide for eighty of these smaller centers in the greater city. Branch libraries have not infrequently been established at the request of large manufacturers or other employers of labor near their places of business, and in some cases the running expenses have been paid by them.

Among librarians also the spirit of mutual helpfulness which has been so characteristic a feature of the library movement in this country has grown greatly. Library clubs, state associations, interstate conferences, and the American Library Association have all grown in membership, while their number has increased threefold at least. Two new schools for training librarians have been established in the past decade, and the older schools have strengthened their curricula and raised their standard for admission. One new journal devoted particularly to the work of public libraries has come into existence.

Any summary of this decade would be incomplete which failed to mention the great additions to American libraries in the shape of special collections or

endowments for special purposes. Such gifts as the John Carter Brown Library of Brown University, the Riant collection at Harvard, the Yale collection of Semitic manuscripts, the Dante collection presented to Cornell by Willard Fiske, the Avery Architectural Library at Columbia, the Morgan collection of Vergils and the Garrett collection of Arabic manuscripts at Princeton, and the Ford and other collections of the New York Public Library, are but conspicuous examples of the collector's generosity which has been so prominent a part of recent library history. The man of wealth may easily give money for a building, but the scholarly collector who turns over to a library for keeping and use of the result of his efforts of years gives perhaps even more munificently. The libraries of this country are yearly receiving such donations in ever increasing numbers.

It would be a rare and happy fate were the librarians of America able to remind themselves of no great losses from their ranks in the past decade. Such is, unfortunately, not the case. Three of the pioneers in library progress have died during this period. Those who know intimately the history of the library movement will at once acknowledge that in the loss of Wm. F. Poole, Justin Winsor and C. A. Cutter the library world has been sorely stricken. Dr. Poole is remembered by historians and librarians alike for his services to American history and bibliog-

raphy. Mr. Winsor's achievements as a cartographer, historian and librarian are too well known to need more than mention. Mr. Cutter, whose death occurred only last summer, was not so widely known outside the circle of technical workers. To librarians he was celebrated for a long series of most valuable contributions to the problems of classification and cataloging, while his personal qualities endeared him to all. That such men were to be found foremost among American librarians is one of the occasions for pride in their calling. Their memory should prove one of the greatest incentives to future workers in their chosen field.

It would be a rash man who should venture to predict the directions of library growth in the next ten years. Certain tendencies, however, may be inferred from the immediate past. It is almost certain that the impetus given to public libraries by Mr. Carnegie will result in steady growth and an increased efficiency in this field. It is equally certain, I think, that more efficient and widely extended state inspection and advice to libraries are likely to be had in the near future. Library legislation is tending to become more uniform in the several states and perhaps the enabling acts which now permit public libraries to be supported by taxation may be exchanged for mandatory acts compelling their establishment after the manner of public schools.

The greatest internal improvements which can be foreshadowed will probably be the growth of a scholarly spirit among librarians, and an increased emphasis on bibliographical work. A large measure of coöperation in the technical details of library administration and the consequent cheapening of its cost may also confidently be expected. Finally, it is entirely probable that the educational value of libraries in the community will come to be greater both by reason of the conscious efforts of the librarians to increase their efficiency, and by the recognition of those efforts on the part of the public whom they serve.

THE AMOUNT OF HELP TO BE GIVEN TO READERS[1,2]

It is my desire to set forth in this paper a practical problem of reference work which confronts every reference librarian and his chief in planning the work of a university or a research library. We exist for readers. How much help can we give them without going beyond the limits of common sense and of our appropriations, without becoming private secretaries or private tutors?

How much help do readers need? Our university libraries (and our public libraries, too, for that matter) discover the utmost variety in the preparedness of readers to use the facilities the libraries offer. The freshman—and occasionally the senior—who knows nothing of how to use a library, who requests something to help "get up Professor X.'s exam.," who "has a theme to write on the sunrise and wants a book on it, don't you know," rubs elbows with the professor who comes in to inquire whether Herr Dr. Syntax of Tübingen ever published a treatise on the Homeric Digamma, or whether you can't find out for him

[1] Read at Minnetonka Lake Conference, American Library Association, at the College and Reference Section, June 23, 1908.

[2] *Library Journal*, July, 1908.

what was the amount of the cotton crop in Oklahoma last fall, for—"it isn't anything I've been able to lay hands on."

To illustrate the extremes of ability to use a library, let me relate two experiences of my own: I well remember my first encounter with a card catalog. It was at the University of Michigan, and too long long ago for me to count the years with comfort, and too few with pride. I had haunted the Detroit Public Library for years, and knew every nook and corner of it—but I had never seen, much less used, a card catalog. I went into the university library in the evening to pass away a couple of hours. I wanted a book—any book—and I was coldly referred to a case of double-tray drawers where little cards were arranged—by authors. I remember to this day turning those cards. Being a methodical soul, even then, I had begun with A, and Aristotle was the first author I happened on. Do you wonder that I turned away from the oak case in which the first card written west of Cambridge was even then said to repose, and went out of that library utterly discouraged? There were no open shelves then, save for a few dictionaries, etc., and no reference librarian, and the "student assistant" on duty that night saw in me only a freshman who wanted to idle away time. I submit there was room for assistance in this case. The book-worm in me couldn't be

downed, even by Aristotle, and yet I remember many a time after that, when I had become thoroughly familiar with the use of the catalog, turning over the author cards at random to find something to read when I was tired or had an hour to spare. A selection of good literature on open shelves is an assistance to readers at a formative period which no university or college library can afford to forego. The more books the student can see and handle the better. They are worth more than catalogs, bibliographies, yes—and the reference librarian!

A few days since I watched a famous scholar at work in the Library of Congress. He evidently had a point of bibliography to settle. He scanned our card catalog, making rapid notes of call-numbers. He took down volume after volume of the British Museum Catalog, making copious notes while his books were being gathered. For two hours he opened volumes, rejected some, kept others; renewed his search, again made notes, and then left as quietly as he came. He had used over a hundred books, had consulted half a thousand entries, I am sure, and had needed no assistance save once when a book was not produced because of an error—on our part, I regret to say. Under his skilful hands our bibliographic tools worked with the precision of a well-oiled engine. It was an inspiring sight to see the rapidity, the ease, the accuracy

with which he went from step to step in his investigations, the assuredness with which he jotted down his final note and went out. That task was done. What assistance did he need from us? Merely the careful doing of our routine duties.

The two cases are not absolutely analogous, for I was seeking a book to read for recreation—the scholar was in search of a definite title, but I should have been equally at sea, I am sure, in trying to find a book on any given subject.

Between those persons, then, who are practically helpless in the face of ordinary library machinery, and those to whom our devices for registering books are useful and easily handled tools, lies the whole world of readers in the kind of libraries with which this section is concerned.

Is the ability to use books and to use libraries an end to be consciously sought in our universities and colleges? At present if a student acquires much facility in these lines it is safe to say that this ability is a by-product of other work, rather than the result of intentional study or instruction. It is well known that in the smaller colleges there is a good deal of efficient work now being done in teaching students to use the library. In the larger libraries where the need for training is greatest instruction is, ordinarily, wanting. We ought to be able to assume that freshmen have learned in their preparatory

school days how to consult a card catalog, how to make out an intelligent call for books, how to use Pool's "Index," and what encyclopædias and bibliographies are for. This is but little in the way of equipment for serious study in a university or research library, but the want of just such an equipment on the part of students, and of readers in a public research library, confines much of the work of assistance to most elementary first aid to the injured. I fear our experience is that the average freshman needs help in doing almost any one of the simple acts just mentioned.

This being so, is it not possible in our larger colleges and universities to impart in some formal manner this elementary training, and to go beyond to the regions of coöperative indices, card indices, great library catalogs, and so on? I see very little that leads me to think this will soon come about. We have heard much talk of "professors of books," of "instruction in bibliography," and so forth, for many years, but I fear that the art of using large collections of books must still be learned by the hard way of experience, rather than be taught in classes. There seems no good reason why it should not be taught formally, nor why the work should not be thorough and hard enough to count toward a degree. At Princeton, where the new "preceptorial system" has been heralded as furnishing the long-

desired "professors of books and reading," I knew but one preceptor who systematically trained his men in using bibliographies or catalogs. Most of them saw to it that the students read diligently, and probably mastered a small number of works which were reserved at the desk, but they conspicuously failed to train them in the use of indices, catalogs, and bibliographies.

If, then, we find oursleves confronted with this lack of training in the methods of using the library, how far can we go in supplying this want in the midst of our routine work? It is evident that we must try to get students, and other readers, in the habit of using ordinary helps, but first it is pertinent to ask what they do when they are puzzled.

At this point I might close this paper, and we could devote an hour to telling the experiences which we all have had in arriving at that most elusive object of inquiry—the thing a reader *really* wants to know about.[3] The chief art of a desk assistant or a reference librarian is—as we all know—the knack of divining by long experience what is actually wanted by inquirers. The fact that so few readers

[3] The classic illustration is the tale—originating at the Redwood Library in Newport, I believe—of the girl who spent half a morning in looking at all the library's books on Greek mythology and religion. Skillful questioning at last brought out the fact that she really wanted to know the exact measure of the waist of the Venus of Milo.

will ask directly for what they want, even when they have a clear idea of their needs—which is seldom the case—is perhaps a greater obstacle to successful reference work than poor equipment, poor catalogs, few bibliographies. But granted that the task is not easy, where does it as a rule begin? What is the point of contact between reader and library?

Most readers will ask questions at the loan desk. We might as well make up our minds to that fact. No matter how elaborate the machinery provided for their assistance elsewhere, they will persist in asking for aid from the people they know, and with whose ways they are familiar, rather than walk twenty-five feet and ask a question of some one who is busily engaged behind an unfamiliar desk which in many cases bears a strange sign. We all do it. Don't we ask the gate-keeper or the policeman in a railroad station our bothersome questions rather than walk to the conspicuously labelled "Bureau of Information"? Shall we demand and expect an inquiring soul to seek out in the library the proper place and persons to whom to put his questions? Granted then that most inquiries in any library which circulates books will originate at the loan desk, how shall we make sure that the questions are properly answered and the inquirers directed to the right person?

It is imperative, I take it, in order to bring this

result about, that the reference librarian should be in close touch and on the most cordial terms with the loan desk assistants. I will not go into the question as to whether he should exercise an actual control of assignments and of the loan desk work generally, though I think the work would benefit by such control. But if the assistants are to receive most of the inquiries, as they will anyhow, it is most important that the man who must be finally responsible for the assistance to be given should know how the questions are met and what amount of aid is attempted at the desk. It is most important also that the desk attendants do not attempt to do too much themselves; that they shall, on the one hand, turn over to the reference librarians inquiries involving much time, and, on the other hand, that they shall direct the inquirer to the catalog and similar helps. We are all agreed that the desk attendant ought to be a compound of the manly and polite virtues. But if we urge on him the value of politeness and unwearying zeal we may often find him overdoing the part. I have seen a good deal of this excess of effort to aid readers. I have not infrequently seen desk assistants drop everything to look up books for readers in the catalog with no thought that they were unwisely doing the reader's proper work for him. The poise and balanced judgment of the true teacher, who remembers that

his business is, as has been well said, "to make himself useless," would be a great desideratum in a desk attendant. I don't suppose that we shall get this for the salaries we usually pay for these positions, but we can at least get the careful supervision and counsel of reference librarian and chief of the circulation work. It is worth while, perhaps, to add that an excess of zeal frequently develops the habit in desk assistants and others of spending an inordinate amount of time on one reader. It requires a pretty firm hand, and good judgment to keep eager assistants, full of the desire to help, within reasonable bounds, without at the same time discouraging the assistant's spirit of helpfulness; but some one must, as a rule, do this, if the work is not to suffer seriously.

If the library is at all large, it is frequently helpful to have a small leaflet printed to explain the methods of securing books. Most libraries give on such leaflets or cards merely the rules and regulations with some descriptive matter. If I may again be permitted a personal experience, let me tell how I was taught to use a card catalog. The Student's Christian Association at Michigan used to print a *Students' Handbook,* full of most sage and excellent counsel for a newcomer. In the one I was given when I entered college I found a couple of paragraphs headed, if my memory serves me, "How to

draw a book." The whole process was described—the catalogs and what they were for; the cabalistic shelf-numbers, and where they were found on the cards. I read that these numbers were always in pencil and were in the upper left-hand corner of author cards only. If you found a book under a subject heading, you must look up the corresponding author card to get the number before presenting your slip at the delivery desk; and it was carefully impressed on me that this number must be on the slip. I don't know who wrote that lucid and detailed explanation, but I do know that I never had any trouble in getting a book at the desk after I had mastered it. If we could once get all our readers inoculated with the call-number germ, we could dispense with about half our cares in desk and reference work. I submit that such a detailed explanation of the *modus operandi* of securing a book would do no harm to the man who already knows the process, and would be of very great assistance to those who don't know just what to do. I would make the leaflet, or whatever you chose to print, compact, but most explicit, and I think it would be more useful than any statement as to the scope and extent of the library's collections.

Suppose then that we have in some manner tided our inquirer over the early difficulties which are the result of inexperience, and suppose that he is aware

of the existence of the card catalog; there remains one final question of serious import. Can a card catalog ever be made self-interpreting? We librarians have apparently proceeded for years on the theory that it can. We have busied ourselves about "evaluations" and descriptive notes, about headings and author entries with the "public" ever in mind, and on our tongues. But I have my very serious doubts whether the card catalog is ever going to become the guide, philosopher, and friend of the ordinary user of libraries. Its inherent difficulties are many and serious, even at the best. It seems fair to say that the average card catalog will always need an interpreter so long as our readers are not trained in its use so that they know the niceties of arrangement, of entry, and sub-headings. Why not recognize this fact? Why not have in our large research libraries at least one attendant whose sole—or chief—duty it shall be to assist the reader desiring to use the catalog? Do you ever go to the catalog yourself when there is an unusual number of readers present that some one does not ask you a question as to what this card means, or how to find some title in the curious machine? I should like to see the experiment tried and to learn the results. I am sure that attendant would earn his money!

Now if we have provided in some way for aiding

our students to use the library intelligently, if we have trained our assistants at the desk to help them to help themselves, still better, if we have given them formal instruction in the art of using books in libraries, there remains the curious problem of the "reserved" books. These books become, in the students' eyes, practically text books, and their attitude toward them is singularly like their indifference toward the algebra or the history which forms the basis for instruction in class-room work. They come frequently, perhaps daily, to the library to read a given number of pages on which they are to be quizzed. There is no enthusiasm for the task as a rule; frequently this reading is an unwelcome requirement, an uncomfortable incident of the college course. We may find this attitude of indifference, or even of distaste, extending toward the whole library. That love for the world of books, that passion for letters which is the hall-mark of the scholar they may—and they do—utterly escape. The great development of the seminar and departmental libraries begets, too often, a similar attitude toward literature in maturer students. Have we not in this situation a challenge to our inventiveness and to our loyalty to our profession? Is there no way in which we may win the enthusiasm and devotion of the modern student for humane letters? We cannot afford to ignore the problem. It exists

and it is growing in seriousness. My own feeling is that it is partially met by a large open-shelf collection, for circulation as well as reference, in the reading room; by the silent invitation of interesting books which may be read without let or hindrance.

There is another class of difficulties which sometimes calls for all the tact the librarian possesses. I refer to his relations with the faculty, and with investigators of experience. It is, from one point of view, absurd to think that the reference librarian can be of much service to an eminent specialist, but our experience generally is, I think, that he so frequently can be of use in bibliographical matters that he is subject to very many demands from the professors and others. In many cases these are perfectly reasonable and legitimate—the service is gladly rendered and the work offers problems of extreme interest to the reference librarian. He is likely to be able, by reason of his familiarity with all sorts of catalogs, to run down titles obscurely quoted, and to perform other feats of library legerdemain in a fashion that not unfrequently astonishes even the trained investigator. This very facility, however, may lead to demands on his time that are wholly unreasonable in view of other responsibilities he must bear. In conversation with reference librarians I have found that the tendency of certain professors to make private secretaries out of them

was a very real difficulty in their work. To meet it requires experience and tact, and, occasionally, the balanced judgment of the head-librarian. The existence of this problem is in itself a witness to the efficiency of the work done by the reference librarian. No expert would trouble him in this way, if the work were poor and weak. It is a problem resulting from good work, and therefore to be welcomed.

Even if the relations with the faculty are in no case such as to cause questioning, I think we are safe in saying that there will always exist the necessity for determining the amount of assistance to be given to seekers after genealogical data. How far can we afford to go in research libraries in aiding those engaged in the gentle sport of "hunting ancestors"? This is a practical problem of every-day work. Shall we decline to give assistance beyond putting the ordinary indices and guides before the reader, or shall we enter into his problems and try to aid him to run down the particular ancestor about whom he is uncertain? If we attempt much of this sort of help, we shall soon find ourselves doing a very considerable amount of extra work. If the other duties are not too heavy, well and good. But should we do this genealogical reference work for readers when other demands on our time are multifarious and important? In general I think we should not. There are plenty of professional genealogists who

can do it better, perhaps, than we can. The university libraries are usually in receipt of numerous inquiries about students in the early years of the institution from their actual or suppositious descendants. This sort of inquiry sees to me perfectly legitimate, the more so as it often leads the inquirer to present documents and other material of value to the university library. But in general I favor refusing to do genealogical reference work for correspondents, particularly those who have no claim on the library.

We may also consider in this connection the question of making transcripts for correspondents. Requests to do this are numerous, in my experience, and frequently burdensome. The amount which we are asked to copy varies from a single line to several chapters. Frequently the circumstances of the correspondents are such as to make the request seem reasonable. I presume we all do more or less of this sort of work, but the problem is to draw the line beyond which we cannot go. Of course the development of the inter-library loan is aiding us to meet the problem to a certain extent. We can say to a correspondent that the book from which transcripts are desired can be sent to the local library where he can make the copy himself, but we cannot, of course, do this in the case of extremely rare works, of manuscripts, and of valuable or heavy newspapers.

When the extract desired is short, we can probably afford to aid the inquirer, but when it involves much time, we had better turn over the inquiry to a professional copyist who will arrange for the work directly with the correspondent.[4]

This brings up the question of certifying under oath to the correctness of such copies. Should we undertake to make attested copies for use in lawsuits? Perhaps this matter does not come up frequently in most libraries, but it is a very troublesome one when it does occur. If a document can be photographed, that process of reproduction will sometimes relieve us of the difficulty. In the case of copies, the lawyers are likely to demand that the chief librarian shall make the attest. Again, calling in a professional copyist or typewriter will relieve the situation. His oath is amply sufficient, and will be accepted by the court.

I have endeavored to show that there are problems as to the amount of aid to be attempted in nearly every department of reference work and loan desk service. Many of them arise from the inexperience of readers—others from the insistent demands of scholars. We can provide against the first by the

[4] Photoduplicating machines have now been developed to a point which renders hand-copying unnecessary. They do not, however, solve the problem of making abstracts, or of deciding what passages are worth photographing.

organization of our own force and by the gradual process of education in using books. The only limit we care to set to our response to the second sort is that of our means. Give us the men and the money and we will take care of the growing demands of the trained workers.

TWO UNSOLVED PROBLEMS IN LIBRARY WORK[1,2]

Occasionally one hears in professional circles, generally from a comparatively recent recruit, some pronouncement to the effect that most fundamental problems of library work have been settled long ago, and that the only tasks now before librarians are those involved in adapting principles already well established to new conditions or in expanding small activities into larger fields. Such expressions are not infrequently coupled with a generous consciousness of the preëminent excellence of American library methods in contrast with those of the rest of the world. We are all more or less familiar with this sort of talk, and are perhaps inclined to be more or less consciously influenced by it. It may, therefore, be wholesome and profitable to turn our attention to at least two problems which are fundamental to the successful prosecution of our calling and which not only are unsolved here as yet, but are—at least in part—in a fair way to solution elsewhere.

When a reader or inquirer comes to a library and

[1] President's address at the meeting of the District of Columbia Library Association, December 13, 1911.

[2] *Library Journal*, January, 1912.

asks for a book whose author and title he knows, he presents our first problem in its most simple form. Where is the book he wants? If it is at once produced, either by the ready memory of the librarian, the aid of an author or a title entry in the catalog, or by whatever other means are used, the problem is solved, and ceases to be more than a matter of ordinary routine. When the work is not readily identified or not readily found, and further search of catalogs or shelves is required, the problem, although complicated somewhat, still remains fairly easy, if the book can be produced in good time. But when the book cannot be produced there arise at once two questions: first, "Is the book here, but for the moment concealed through some of the intricacies or deficiencies of cataloging or failure of other library machinery?" and second, "If not here, where is it?"

We assume that the inquirer has a correct description of his desired work. Were we to go into the possibilities of confusion, inaccuracy and error which lurk in even a scholarly reader's requests, we should speedily convince ourselves that there are plenty of unsolved problems of another sort awaiting the unwary librarian.

There have not been wanting of late signs of an untoward satisfaction with our catalogs, particularly in the matter of author entries. We are all agreed

that much has been accomplished in the direction of simplicity and uniformity. There has been some shaking of heads over the alarming size of card catalogs and over the loss of time in many directions consequent upon that size. I hold that there are many matters which still await final settlement, not the least of which is this very question of bulk. But we are here concerned with the problem of getting the reader his book. Now, that book is more likely than ever before to be one of those baleful things known as a "part," a member of a "series," a "heft," a "number." This, as we all know, is an age of journalistic and coöperative publishing, the small dues of a large number of interested specialists, or the munificence of some endowment making possible the publication of all sorts of treatises which would remain in obscurity—often, it is to be feared, deserved—without such adventitious aid.

Leaving, then, for the present, other difficulties of our catalogs as they now stand, are they so made that they yield certain and accurate information in the case of books produced in any of the coöperative methods of modern publication in this age of societies, foundations, expeditions, clubs, international undertakings, and governmental publishing? No one of us dares to affirm that they do. Who has not used every known means of assistance, lists and advertising pamphlets carefully preserved, the old covers of

"continuations," the special catalogs of certain libraries, and bibliographies of all sorts to help him to discover *in his own library* books whose presence ought (it would seem) to have been revealed by the card catalog almost instantly? Who has not struggled with that endless and vexatious task, the record of receipt of continuations and serials? Who has not cursed—at least inwardly—the binder and the binding record when looking for such works? Who of us, no matter what his library experience, no matter how small his library, has not been shamed by discovering at some later date a book or a "part" he has confidently asserted was not in the library?

Shall we throw all the blame for this sort of thing on the much-abused catalogers and makers of cataloging rules? By no means. It is the business of every one of us who work in libraries to join heartily in the effort to make the record, the key, to our collections as useful, as complete, as adequate as we can. We may fairly say to the specialists who catalog that they should meet us who use their product half way; that they must, of course, study the needs of users of the catalog, and that every device making for plainness, clarity, speed, and convenience in its consultation should be employed. But the blame, if blame there be, rests ultimately on those who do not make plain the difficulties under which they labor. We have a perfectly apparent condition in

regard to our records of series and groups of all sorts; they either are too inadequate, or too clumsy, or too slowly made. When each entry has a separate card they fill up too much space and consume too much time (though numerous guides would help that difficulty); when several entries are made on a card they are hard to read, and when the books come out at irregular intervals and are afterward bound into one volume—and always cited and inquired for by the title of that volume and not by their numbers or names in the set—or when they exhibit any other of the trying and puzzling freakishness of Teutonic publishing, we are driven to distraction, and the inquirer begins "to think scornful" of trained librarians. Experimentation, criticism, comparison, may perhaps put us in the way of making our card catalogs instruments of precision. And even instruments of precision may be worked faultily by careless or indifferent guardians.

Meantime—while we have been indulging in reflections on but one phase of complex catalogs—where is that book? We can't find it; our catalogs, our shelf-lists, our order-lists, our serial records, our book catalogs and bibliographies don't show it here. Now, while we *may* be able to suggest a substitute (and therein lies much of the art of the successful librarian), our problem with which we started is not solved. The inquirer is not helped, if his need

be a definite one for a given book. He wants it; wants to borrow it; wants, perhaps, to go to it. Where is it to be found in these United States of America?

How often we have had to say, "I don't know!" How often have we made answer, "It *may* be in Harvard, or the Lenox, or the John Carter Brown"! How often have we said, "There is a special collection on that subject at Cornell or at the Boston Public Library. Write to the librarian inquiring for it there." Less frequently we have, of course, been able to say, "A copy is in the Boston Athenaeum or in the Peabody Library, or the Avery Architectural Library of Columbia, or in Mr. Church's library," or, "There was a copy sold in the Brinley or the Hurst sale"? And with what quiet scorn has our reader looked at us when we have proudly told him that there is a copy in the British Museum, or the Library of the Faculty of Advocates at Edinburgh.

Is not this state of affairs a challenge to our inventiveness, our power of coöperation, our collective responsibility? Since the day of great catalogs in book form appears to be definitely past, what substitute have we for their precise and ready information? The lists of special collections and the union lists of serials are a help, but they are all too limited in scope. Few libraries suffice in themselves for the necessities of scholars. We need—they need—a

means of locating a book not in the library in which they are working.

The basis for such a list already exists in the printed catalog cards of various libraries, so fully described in the November (1911) *Library Journal*. The titles—now about 500,000[3]—of the Library of Congress cards form an unrivalled nucleus for a union list of works in the large libraries and the special collections of this country. Perhaps we have not fully realized what it means to have a basis of nearly half a million titles which will soon automatically extend itself to as many more. Consider for a moment the probable number of works in other American libraries not represented in the Library of Congress cards. Will it be much more than half a million titles when the re-cataloging is completed, a consummation actually in sight? Perhaps. Who can say? But even if it should be that or double that number, there is no serious physical obstacle in the mere size to grouping and filing two million or more cards.

However, is the proposition for a union catalog a mere dream, an ideal never to be realized? By no means. A decade should see every book in the District of Columbia not in the Library of Congress represented by a card printed by that library, or

[3] In 1925, over 800,000.

under its rules, or by an entry in a book catalog. Look at the beginning which has been made. Titles from the Public Library, the Department of Agriculture, the Geological Survey, the Bureau of Education, and the Army War College have been printed for some years. During the past year they have been printed for the Bureau of Fisheries, the Bureau of Labor, and the Engineer School. These cards are now filed in three catalogs in the Library of Congress.[4] There are just two large government libraries not likely to be covered by printed cards within ten years—the Surgeon General's Library and the Documents Office Library. For both of these adequate catalogs and check-lists in book form exist, and I should not like to risk my reputation on any prophecy that even *these* libraries would not eventually be found in line with printed cards—at least for books not in the Library of Congress collections.

The other libraries now printing cards—John Crerar, Chicago University, New York Public, Boston Public, Harvard University, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh—print (or will print) *mainly* for books not represented by cards in the Library of Congress set. What escapes the net thus spread at present comprise (1) books in these libraries

[4] The "Second official," in the Catalog division, the so-called "Union catalog," and the author catalog in the card section.

acquired prior to the beginning of their adoption of the printed card for their catalogs (now the bulk of their collections, it must be admitted); (2) books in series not yet analyzed by any of these libraries (no inconsiderable number); (3) works in special collections in other libraries, or in the libraries devoted to special fields (*e.g.*, the Dante collection at Cornell, the Hispanic Society's Library); (4) occasional book rarities in general libraries.

We have already filed at the Library of Congress in one alphabet the printed (or otherwise duplicated) cards from all these libraries, save the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. This *Union catalog* now contains approximately 650,000 cards and is already of very great aid in locating a desired book. The shortcomings of the present combined list are numerous and painful; still every entry which is there is a gain, and so far as the list goes, it has proven its worth. The next step is to go on with this union catalog enlarging it in every way possible, and making it available to investigators, both away from Washington and here.

Another step in the preparation of a union catalog of the important titles in American libraries is the adoption of a plan long followed, I am told, at Harvard. When a list comes out of rare items in any library, two copies are procured, cut up, the slips mounted, the name of the library stamped on the

cards, which are then filed in the official catalog. Frequently the fact that a copy is in Providence, in Princeton, in Ann Arbor, and can be procured through inter-library loan satisfies an inquirer's need, and saves not only the cost, but, even more important, the time (possibly years in the case of a very rare book) which would otherwise be lost before it could be procured. The plan needs only to be suggested to show its patent usefulness. There should not be any serious difficulty in carrying it into effect. We should then find ourselves able to say that a book not in the government libraries of the District, and not shown by their printed cards to be in any one of our greater libraries, *is* to be found in some special collection. I need not dwell on the service to scholarship of such definite information.

When the Prussians began the *Gesammtkatalog* of their university libraries in 1899, they had no such basis to work on as the printed cards of the Library of Congress furnishes us. They had the enormous advantage (from the point of execution) of government control of the libraries involved in the scheme. They are steadily at work under rigid rules, and the catalog is steadily growing, with every assurance of accuracy and symmetry. But when it is done, and when the work of the Auskunftsbureau[5] is in full

[5] See Berlin, Königliche Bibliothek. Jahresberichte, Anhang, 1909–1910, and earlier years.

swing, there will be no very great advantage over our situation, if we only plan *our* union catalog with a little thoroughness now, and succeed in impressing on librarians its practical value. We are able to save much time and trouble to investigators now. There is no reason why we should not greatly extend the service we now render. We shall live to see the day—and we shall not be so very old, either—when we can give a definite answer to the question, "Where is that book?"

So much for the book which is known, but not at hand. How are we prepared to cope with the request—again from a reader who knows his need—for the best book or books on a given topic, or for *any* book on that topic, in other words, to answer the request for a book *not* known? Of course, this question opens up at once the whole field of subject cataloging and of bibliographies. I do not propose to cover the whole of that field. Five years ago, at the Narragansett Pier Conference, I set forth certain views on subject cataloging. Some points which stand out very clearly as a result of further discussion and reflection on our subject catalogs as an aid to investigators I desire to mention. I wish, by the way, that I could be as confident of the future of subject cataloging as I am of that of providing a general author catalog for the United States.

Definiteness of subject headings seems much more

assured than it did in 1906. We have several agencies which contribute to that end. First, the new A. L. A. "List of subject headings" has at last appeared, too recently for any detailed criticism to-night. It is about four times the size of the old list, and—judging from a hasty examination—about ten times as valuable. Most of the changes, especially in subject headings, seem to be in the direction of precision and definiteness. Thus we have a new tool.

Second, the Library of Congress has begun the publication of its list of headings, which, like the A. L. A. list, is of general headings only, omitting most specific names. (I greatly regret this omission myself.) The value of this list will grow steadily more apparent with the years, especially as the printed cards will contain the same headings. The headings to be used in cataloging the Law Library have also been printed in tentative form for criticism and study. Here are two more tools, both extremely helpful in teaching method and in securing uniformity of treatment.

Several of our largest libraries have comparatively recently taken up the systematic study and revision of their catalogs, among them Harvard, Columbia, Yale, and Chicago Universities. While as yet but little has got into print as the result of these efforts, they are bound in time to produce valuable results, which will become known and perhaps settle into

principles of subject cataloging. Thus the question is being agitated and will not continue a matter of indifference.

The fact remains, however, that good subject cataloging at the present time is largely a matter of the personal judgment of individual catalogers. There has not been formulated any such body of rules for subject entry as has been evolved by years of experiment and discussion for author entry. In the very nature of things this is probably inevitable. The author is but one person, or at most a group of persons. When once the books are written they do not change. An entry for the author which satisfies one generation of students is almost certain to satisfy the next generation, at least the exceptions will be few. But the subject, even of a simple book, is seldom single; the viewpoint of the users changes with untoward rapidity, and those users are both multifarious and to the last degree diverse. To devise adequate rules and methods of subject entry is a task which makes a far greater demand on our profession than any we have yet met. And when we have met it as best we know how, it remains to be done over again by our successors.

Moreover, the subject catalog suffers more than the author catalog from the disturbing factor of size. Groups of subject cards which reach into the hundreds or even thousands are an insult to the

investigator as they stand in most of our catalogs to-day. They waste his time; they hinder his judgment in selection; they baffle rather than help.

Two remedies for the problem of size have been suggested—a selection of the valuable titles, and an inverse chronological arrangement of entries. The first frankly confesses that the catalog breaks down of its own weight. The second endeavors to prevent the strain from reaching the breaking point. I have suggested a combination of the two methods, but so far no library, to my knowledge, has attempted it. Another effort to meet the difficulty—although, perhaps, not undertaken with this trouble in mind—is the publication on every hand of *select* lists of references on special topics. Perhaps we shall yet fall back on these as the solution, reserving our subject catalogs in their complete form for those few plodding readers who desire to cover a subject in its entirety.

The situation which confronts the reference librarian is frankly difficult when asked to produce the best work on a given topic, and its difficulty increases in direct ratio to the size of the library and the zeal of the cataloger in multiplying subject cards. Whenever the inquiry is definite, minute, and limited we can do pretty well. There is little trouble, for instance, in picking out two or three fairly recent and valuable books on the War of 1812,

on Calvin, on the Ice Age, and letting the reader select the one most suited to his need. The case is far different when it comes to inquiries for such broad topics as naval science, the Reformation, or geology. How to meet such an inquiry from the subject catalog in a large library I do not know, at any rate, as catalogs are now made. We turn instinctively to bibliographies, to book catalogs, to almost anything but a mass of cards. I had occasion recently to look at the Library of Congress cards under the heading: "Bible. New Testament. *Bibliography.*" to see whether anything had been printed since 1900 on that topic which would take the place of Thayer's "The use of books." It took me ten minutes of searching under various heads and sub-heads to discover that I could find in the cards nothing more recent and nothing else probably so good. A hasty search of the last two years of the *American Journal of Theology* gave me several items in about the same time. True, I had to wait while the magazine was sent for. This again is a challenge. We are making subject catalogs which break down of their own weight in general fields, while yielding satisfactory results in topics on which the literature is limited, either because of their obscurity or their individuality. Why not frankly face the situation and devise remedies?

And yet on how many subjects do we find no

entries or no recent books? How often do even our large catalogs fail us? Here again, despite all we have just said as to the bulk of our subject catalogs and the serious inconvenience it occasions, why not follow the plain lead of our author entries? We have the beginnings of an author list of titles in American libraries *not* in the Library of Congress. We have author and subject lists of books in the Library of Congress so far as the re-cataloging has gone. Why not procure enough copies of their cards from the other libraries which print to cover all *their* subject entries as well? The value of such an union subject catalog is perhaps most quickly seen in such a field as biography. The question whether a life of some comparatively obscure person has been printed is one of the most difficult we are called on to answer. A subject card in such a list would settle at least that point. There are hosts of other questions which would be solved, or put in the way of solution, by such a union catalog.

Remember, this is no proposal for anything unreasonable or immensely difficult or costly. It is merely for an extension on definite lines of a work already well begun. The difficulties of reconciling conflicting entries in filing, and all the minor inconveniences of such a task I do not ignore. We are encountering them all the time, and solving them somehow. The value of the results is out of all

proportion to these difficulties. Even on the score of method in cataloging, such an opportunity for laboratory observation in comparative work would be worth creating, could we ignore the practical benefit to readers. That inter-library loans throughout the country would be at once greatly increased in number if such a union catalog of subjects and authors were to be found in the Library of Congress goes without saying. That the demand for information would soon make heavy inroads on the time of the Library of Congress staff is likewise certain. But that library has not shrunk from its duty to scholarship and learning in making public its own contents, nor will it, I am confident, long hesitate to aid in assembling and using material which shall show the inquirer—who has been patiently waiting all this time—where is to be found the book it does not have.

TRAINING IN THE USE OF BOOKS[1,2]

It is my good fortune to have in my office in the Library of Congress a collection of books which recalls to me daily one of the great men of our country, a man whose memory is especially dear to Virginians, that most distinguished alumnus of the College of William and Mary, Thomas Jefferson. Mr. Jefferson spent much time and money in gathering a library. His efforts extended over many years. In a letter written in 1814 he described them as follows:

. . . . You know my collection, its condition and extent. I have been fifty years making it, and have spared no pains, opportunity or expense, to make it what it is. While residing in Paris, I devoted every afternoon I was disengaged, for a summer or two in examining all the principal bookstores, turning over every book in my hand, and putting by every thing which related to America, and indeed whatever was rare and valuable in every science. Besides this, I had standing orders during the whole time I was in Europe, on its principal book-marts, particularly Amsterdam, Frankfort, Madrid, and London, for such works relating to America as could not be found in Paris. So that, in that department particularly, such a collection was made as probably can never again be effected, because it is hardly probable that the same opportunities, the same time, industry, perseverance and expense, with the same knowledge of the bibliography of the subject would again happen to be in concurrence. During the same period, and after my return to America, I was led to

[1] An address delivered at the College of William and Mary.

[2] *The Sewanee Review*, July, 1912.

procure also whatever related to the duties of those in the high concerns of the nation. . . . .

This collection gathered with so much pains by the former President was purchased by the Government in 1815, and became the nucleus of the present Library of Congress. The greater part of that library had been destroyed in the previous August, when the Capitol was burned by the British troops. For many years Mr. Jefferson's books formed the most useful and valuable portion of the collection, and even to-day certain of them are indispensable to investigators. The collection numbered about 7,000 volumes. The disastrous fire of 1851, which destroyed a large part of the library, proved especially destructive to Mr. Jefferson's books; less than 2,500 survived, and the wear and tear of ninety-five years has reduced this number to 2,000. These, carefully preserved as the "Jefferson Collection," remain a witness to the industry, learning, and zeal of the author of the Declaration of Independence.

But fortunately we are not left to infer from this —less than one-third—the character of the remainder of the collection formed by Mr. Jefferson. Almost as soon as the books were put in place, a catalog of them was issued by the Library. This catalog was arranged in forty-four chapters, following the classification which Mr. Jefferson had himself devised, and which remained in effect with some minor

changes, to the end of the century. The library revealed by the catalog of 1815 was undoubtedly one of the best in America at that day. It was strongest in law and in history, especially that of America, but it contained many valuable works and sets in philosophy, classical literature, theology, and belles-lettres. The books were of high character, and were mostly in good editions and sound bindings. When we reflect that it was bought largely in the midst of engrossing public duties, in time of war, and in great part under the disadvantage of remoteness from the bookmarkets of the old world, the marvel is that it was so good.

In 1815 there were but few libraries of any size, public or private, in the United States. This collection of only 7,000 volumes ranked high in numbers. Harvard College could boast some 16,000 in 1790; the New York Society Library, about 14,000; the Library Company and Loganian Library of Philadelphia, some 18,000; and the Library Society of Charleston, S. C., about 7,500. There may have been half a dozen other libraries of over 7,000 volumes scattered along the Atlantic seaboard. Private libraries numbering more than a few thousand books were rare, and Mr. Jefferson's collection was a very notable one for that day.

I say "for that day," since the increase in the number of libraries and in their size since 1815 has been

little short of marvellous. There are to-day in the United States over 2,300 libraries having more than 8,000 volumes each. Their total numbers reach well over eighty-five millions of volumes, and eleven million pamphlets, while in the year 1908 nearly twenty millions of persons are recorded as having actually read and studied in their reading-rooms. Over seventy-five million books were issued for home use from only 1,384 of these 2,300. There are now over 10,000 persons employed in library work (including those charged with the care of buildings). Six libraries have more than 500,000 volumes; nine, more than 300,000 but less than half a million; and sixty-two, less than 300,000 but more than 100,000. Thus there are to-day in our land seventy-seven libraries each one of which is more than fourteen times as large as was the Library of Congress when it started afresh with President Jefferson's collection in 1815. And that Library has grown from this original 7,000 to almost two million books and pamphlets, adding of late years over 100,000 volumes annually. Moreover, the number of small collections, school, office, village, college, professional libraries, collections which are not included in this somewhat wearisome array of figures, has increased, if not proportionately, at least very greatly. There must be available for use to a greater or less degree in this country at least sixty-five millions of books—a figure which still falls far short of one to each inhabitant.

Moreover, the production of books and of magazines has increased in about the same proportions. Newspapers are probably no more numerous in proportion to the population than they were in the second decade of the nineteenth century, for most of the publishing activity of that day was shown in journalism. We have no reliable figures for the publication of books and pamphlets in that period of our history. The great scholarly bibliographies have dealt largely with the colonial period, and the bulky trade bibliographies begin much later. In the midst of the War of 1812 and the impoverished condition which preceded and followed it, the publication of books was probably small. Moreover, it is, of course, a commonplace of history that the United States was almost wholly an agricultural country in 1815; and in communities devoted largely to farming, book publishing does not ordinarily flourish as it does in an industrial society. A few hundred books, perhaps a thousand or more pamphlets, probably made up the annual output of this country in 1815. In Europe the number was, of course, very much greater, although the period of the Napoleonic Wars was not favorable to extensive publishing.

Contrast this meagre production with what has been aptly termed "our literary deluge." In 1910 there were published in the United States 13,470 books, by 2,217 publishing firms. This number does

not include "directories and similar publications, official publications (with a very few exceptions), or minor pamphlets." Thus all but a few dozens of the thousands of publications of the national, state, and municipal governments are not counted in these figures, nor are the hosts of catalogs of schools and colleges and many valuable publications of societies, such as year-books, annuals, bulletins, and journals, all of them materials of some worth, which are certain to find a resting place on library shelves. No account is taken in arriving at this number, 13,470, by the *Publishers' Weekly*, of the extensive magazine output of the country, nor of the huge number of newspapers of all sorts. Therefore the formidable array of nearly fourteen thousand books produced in the United States in one year is far from being the whole number which is to be reckoned with.

Great Britain produced, in 1910, 10,804 works; Germany, about 31,000; France, 12,615, and Italy, 6,788. The Scandinavian countries, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Greece, and Turkey must have published among them at least twice as many as Italy, one would suppose, while Australia, South Africa, and India will easily bring the total up to 85,000 works in European languages—not including the literary product of the great Slavic nations. This makes no account of the very considerable annual output of books on the Orient and in South America.

We shall not be far wrong if we say that at the very least 100,000 books are printed each year, any one of which may perhaps be called for by a reader in one of our great libraries.

This is a deluge indeed. What a contrast to the conditions of Mr. Jefferson's day. Then the well-read man of letters or affairs, undisturbed by telegrams, cables, newspaper extras, telephone calls, ticker bulletins, automobile honks, next month's magazines, or "red-hot" fiction, could sit down to a leisurely perusal of the books his agent had sent him from Philadelphia or London, could re-read the classics, could keep abreast of the best thought of the day with reasonable success, and could master the contents of a library of 7,000 volumes with the comfortable assurance that he had read the majority of the best works of the world of letters.

That day has passed. The scholar of to-day is ever fearful lest he shall have missed the latest treatise on his little specialty, which yet, despite its limitations, has a literature of its own. The average man of intelligence is well-nigh helpless before the mass of books in even a minor library. The craze for the "latest" novel, the most "up-to-date" reference book, is the characteristic note of the present demand for books. How, in the face of this flood, shall the young man of our day find his bearings; how shall he ride the flood a master; by virtue of what training shall he

make it serve him, carry him to his goal, aid him in his life work? How shall he avoid being overwhelmed by numbers, misled by cheap newness, misguided by advertising, and lost in a wilderness of printed matter when he essays to work in a modern library or to attempt the mastery of any important question? This is my theme: *training in the use of books*, the acquiring of a scholar's attitude toward the printed page. Its timeliness is proven by every library bulletin, every publisher's announcement, by the experience of every teacher, and, I fear I must add, by the painful witness of much incompetent and careless journalism, and the enormous profits of the publishers of cheaply made subscription books.

How that training may be obtained, and where it shall begin, I shall endeavor to set forth briefly, in the hope that such a theme cannot fail to be of interest to all connected with education.

We may begin with the child in school. Now certain elementary facts about books one naturally supposes everybody observes and knows. And yet experience shows that most school children—and many of their elders, for that matter—are seldom acquainted with the basic fact that a book has an author. To them a book is a book; their arithmetic is their arithmetic book; not Robinson's, or Smith's, or Wentworth's, or anybody else's arithmetic. Nobody ever points out to them the fact that their text-

book was written by anyone, and they usually know it by the color or by the name of the teacher in whose class they used it. This curious ignorance on the part of school children was first brought to my notice years ago, when examining orally a large number of candidates for entrance to a college and to its preparatory department. Out of nearly a hundred young people ranging from twelve to twenty, not one was able to tell us the names of the writers of *all* the text-books he had used during the previous term, and few, very few, knew the names of any of the authors. The answers were so extremely vague in most cases as to lead me—in my inexperience—to doubt seriously whether there had been any actual study of the various subjects. "We had the same grammar everybody uses;" "The English history was a little green book," was the kind of reply my questioning elicited. And yet these same young folk did well in their classes, and gave evidence of having really worked at the matter of these books concerning whose makers they had so little knowledge. Perhaps the matter *is* the all-important thing, but the poor author who gave it form —I speak for all makers of text-books—deserves the reward of at least a bowing acquaintance. And the indifference to the author in the school days is too frequently carried over into later life. It is an indifference fostered by the anonymous journalism of the day, whose remote results are seen in part in

the greedy devouring in our great circulating libraries of any trash that is called a novel. Perhaps the irresponsibility of school children as respects their author and his work was never better shown than by an incident which has always stood in my mind as the finest example of ineffective teaching I have met with. A young girl of my acquaintance, on being asked in what grade she was in school, said she was in the third year of the high school. "Then you have been reading Cicero's Orations against Catiline?" "Well," was the meditative answer, "we *have* been reading somebody's orations about Catiline; I guess they were Cicero's, but whether they were *for* or *against* Catiline, I don't remember."

If the author deserves to be known to his readers, the title of his book likewise claims a certain attention. Doubtless it is a less important detail than the other, but nevertheless not wholly negligible. Here again the child in school generally receives small aid and comfort from his teacher. The beginning of a proper training in the use of books comes when children are taught that books are written by people, have a definite name, and frequently appear in different forms. We hear much in pedagogic circles of training in observation. That observation may well begin with such elementary details as these.

Any librarian will testify that titles are more frequently remembered than authors, but that they are

seldom remembered correctly. The girl who demands the red book her sister had last month is sometimes less puzzling than the woman who calls insistently for the book entitled: *For Better or For Worse,* finally going off contented with Miss Johnston's *To Have and to Hold,* remarking complacently that she knew it was something out of the marriage service.

It is not too much to expect that school children may have it pointed out by someone that a book generally has a table of contents and an index. I wonder how many teachers ever do this? How frequently do we find children helplessly turning the pages, looking in vain for some half-forgotten passage! Makers of text-books generally provide indexes and tables, and presumably teachers use them, but too seldom are children systematically taught the necessity and use of these keys to the contents of a book.

If we can secure some such early training in observing and understanding the primal factors in the make-up of a book, we may surely demand also of teachers some sort of instruction in elementary discrimination between books. Books are not like bricks, or bales of cotton, or bolts of cloth—a fundamental fact which is not always clear to business men in estimating the cost of handling and buying them. Each book is a separate entity—a mass of paper, to be sure, on which there are certain impressions in ink, but much more than that, the physical expression of someone's

thought. Now if the child has learned that some man or woman wrote his text-book, he has grasped the prime element in discriminating between books. Given one man's work, he may be aware that another man has done the same sort of thing. Hence the necessity of knowing how well each has done it, in order to make a choice. But while the selection of books is perhaps too serious a matter to enter into this primary training in the use of books, the knowledge of what field or parts of a field different books cover, is not. Moreover, this knowledge—derived, of course, from a study of the table of contents; for one seems naturally to come back always to the elements—is of extreme practical importance. The sooner a boy learns that not all American histories come down to the year 1912, and that there are numerous histories devoted to small periods of time, the better for him. That the author has a plan and purpose in writing and that two books apparently on the same topic may be written from absolutely different points of view and for different ends, he will discover, if only he is made to read prefaces and introductions. If a child once fairly enters into the idea that an author writes for a particular class—as for children; or for a particular purpose, as in a purely outline or elementary history; or from a motive of his own, as a defence of his own conduct or the exposition of a theory,—he has begun to discriminate between books. When

he has once begun, he will not be likely to cease. And he will, by virtue of this training, be in the way to acquire an intelligent attitude toward books, a knowledge that they are made by people who differ in gifts and in purpose, in ability and in design. Moreover, he will not be led into the very common error of assuming that a well-known book is necessarily the book he wants. It is a fact to which all librarians will bear witness that the average man who wants to know something in English history asks for Macaulay's History, in entire ignorance of the fact that it is devoted largely to the reign of James II. So Gibbon is asked for by persons who wish to know something about the Gracchi, and Carlyle's *French Revolution* for the later career of Napoleon. Such elementary training as that which I have urged would do away with this kind of error.

The use of elementary books of reference is more common in schools than is this training in observation. No school room beyond the sixth grade is complete without a dictionary and an atlas. But very few teachers realize what a wealth of information is contained in a modern dictionary, or train their pupils to find it. I may safely say also that they fail to train them so well and thoroughly in the order of the alphabet that it becomes second-nature to them—a key to arrangement of all sorts of books and catalogs, which they will need to use all their lives. I

know I am on forbidden ground here, and that it is unfashionable in these days to teach the alphabet. But I am thankful that I "learned my letters" when a child. I do not insist on that process as a preliminary to learning to read—but very soon after a child has learned to read, he should be drilled in the alphabet as a set of symbols. When he has learned this, he is ready to use a dictionary or an encyclopædia. Now the wonders of a modern unabridged dictionary are not revealed to the casual observer. But they are a constant source of delight to children—I speak from experience—and of information to the teacher. A little training here will reveal to a bright child possibilities of which he will be eager to take advantage later. And how few children are *trained* to use by way of quick consultation their atlases or the maps in their geographies. Here is a fertile field for ingenuity and resource on the part of teachers. I find very few grown people who use atlases with speed and certainty. Usually an uncertain finger wanders over the map in search of the name of the desired place. The letters and figures in the margin, the indexes, the table of contents, they ignore. And yet how simple are these devices. They are so easily used that children when once introduced to their meaning make a game of locating a town, a river, a county.

This elementary sort of training can reasonably be expected of all pupils who complete the primary

course. The ordinary text-book, the dictionary, the atlas, are all the vehicles, all the apparatus required for conveying it. There is no need of an elaborate library or much formal training, and yet the results of the teacher's occasional direction and careful supervision will show later all the difference between a blind following of a set of printed formulas, and a discriminating and intelligent attitude toward a book.

Not all children who reach our secondary schools find in them good school libraries. We have been slow to realize the need of a school library in the curriculum of the high school, and the importance of its function in the scheme of secondary education. And even where books have been provided generously, there has been but little appreciation of the possibilities of training which are latent in even a small collection. Too often the care of the high school library has been an added burden placed on an already heavily-taxed teacher, or has been left to the ignorant enthusiasm of some bright pupil. Within the past twenty years many of our larger cities have been appointing librarians for the high school libraries. Moreover, in a few places these librarians have become what they should all be, teachers of the art of using books. Slowly, under the influence of some of our state library commissions, and of some enlightened high school principals, teachers and school authorities are beginning to see that the school library affords

a basis for learning how to use books in collections throughout life. Not alone is this knowledge absolutely needed as an aid to modern instruction in literature, history, and science, but it is even more valuable as furnishing the means whereby pupils may become adepts in the use of libraries, an art which has been won by most of us through hard knocks, but which can be taught very simply and effectively. Let us not forget the necessity for that art in modern life, the flood of books with which the pupil will have to struggle later. In the secondary school he can and should learn the elements of dealing with books in libraries, and when he comes to college he should not be helpless, but happy in the opportunity to make quick and efficient use of a library of fifty, one hundred, or even five hundred thousand volumes.

He should learn by formal instruction of the high school librarian—instruction which, to my knowledge, is now given with great success in many schools—that books have to be arranged or classified on some sort of a system. Usually they are grouped on the principle of likeness—those treating of the same theme being placed together. If he once grasps that idea and its corollary—that as one book can go only in one place, it must be placed with those books which it most resembles—he will quickly understand classification notations, and will not be baffled by figures, letters, or decimal points. He should also

learn the use of a simple catalog on cards, and should master the principle of alphabetical arrangement. If a boy knows how to use the card catalog of a high school library, there is no reason why he cannot use easily any other catalog, even so huge a thing as the card catalog of the Library of Congress with its two thousand trays and its hundreds of thousands of entries.

In the secondary school also the pupils can easily learn the use of the indexes to magazines. Few tools are more helpful than *Poole's Index* and the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*. There is no reason why they should not be known to all high school students, even although the greater part of the volumes indexed are not in the school or town library.

When he is ready for college, therefore, a young man may reasonably be supposed to have an elementary equipment in the use of books, if only his teachers have deliberately tried to give it to him. No extensive apparatus, no costly library, no great amount of time are needed. Careful and tactful teaching of the habit of using books as tools; an intelligent direction of the pupil's attitude toward the books he has at hand; the fullest possible use of the school library under competent guidance—these are all that a training in the use of books demands as a beginning. It is easy to estimate the advantage which a student thus equipped has over one who has known books

merely as printed matter containing certain information which he has more or less reluctantly acquired, and whose ability to use books in collections is absolutely a negative quantity.

It is a stock complaint against our modern colleges that they do not acquaint students with the great literatures of the world. Education for culture is said not to exist, or at least not to succeed. Whatever measure of truth may be found in this contention, it may be worth while to point out that the old-fashioned college course of four years, rigid and arid as it was, failed even more completely than that of to-day to introduce students either to the great literatures of Greece and Rome—small samples of which were minutely and painfully dissected daily—or to those of the modern languages. In few cases in the earlier two-thirds of the nineteenth century was the routine of text-book recitation or formal lecture abandoned in favor of a wide comparison of authorities or an independent study of the literature of a period. If I do not read amiss educational history and the reminiscences of our fathers, the old-fashioned college course was certainly not that "good old time" to which educational reformers would hark back. Certainly no young man in any American college had an opportunity to study in the forties, or even in the sixties, such topics as the Romantic Movement in German literature, the French Chansons de Geste,

or the Greek dialectic poets, topics which appear in catalogues as sample elective courses in colleges of no great size or extraordinary resources.

We should be far wrong, however, did we infer that the old-fashioned college with its small faculty, its rigid curriculum, its hard and fast class lines, failed to foster a love for literature and reading. There was more leisure for reading, both on the part of students and faculty. There was almost without exception an abundance of life in the literary and debating societies—organizations which are not everywhere vigorous to-day. Athletics did not absorb so much of the energy of the student-body, and it is probably true that there was more reading on individual initiative than there is to-day, when formal instruction is found in so much wider a range of subjects, even in the smallest colleges.

In fact, the modern college and university have bred a peculiar attitude toward books on the part of students. Certain books are required to be read for entrance in English—books which are the birthright of all who speak the English tongue. And many a lad reads and cons notes on *Quentin Durward*, or *Ivanhoe*, or the *Princess*, in about the spirit in which boys read the immortal commentaries of Julius Cæsar. "Collateral reading" has been run so hard that books to be used in a certain course have become merely an adjunct—Professor So-and-so's books—and are even

less than a text-book in the eyes of the student. Worse than that, the seminar and departmental libraries have had too frequently a deleterious influence on the advanced student. No other books interest him —if they are not in the seminar library, they are not worth while. Instead of broadening his range of knowledge, this very convenient grouping of certain books as tools, tends to restrict it. Lest I may seem to exaggerate, I will illustrate by an anecdote which came under my observation. A certain very distinguished professor in one of our largest universities by some unusual chance wandered so far from his seminar that he came on the general card catalog of the university library. "How convenient and admirable a thing this catalog is," said he, after half an hour's study of it; "I must have it copied for the economics seminar."

There results too frequently, from this and other influences, an attitude of indifference toward the college library on the part of students. I have watched students who came every day for weeks to read certain required books, and have never seen them read anything else—doubtless it was true that they had not the time. I have seen the graduate student stick to the seminar until it grew to represent the world of letters to him. I have regretfully noted the presence in laboratories of students of the sciences for hours every day—hours so long that they never had a

glimpse of any cultural reading. And—I fear I must say it—*horribile dictu!*—I have known boys who passed an entire four years in a college with 350,000 books in its library, and who in those four years never entered its doors.

Now a large part of this indifference is the result of at least two factors: the lack of the sort of training in the secondary schools which I have been emphasizing, and the almost criminal indifference on the part of college and university authorities, including their librarians, I fear—toward the development of cultural reading and the sense of mastery of books. Plunge an untrained boy into a library of thirty, fifty, or hundred thousands books—how is he to pick and choose, how shall he get his start? He needs formal instruction in the rudiments, nay, even in the refinements, of bibliography. In the German universities the professor usually lectures at the beginning of each course on the bibliography of the subject he is about to discuss before the class during the semester. Those lectures are generally the most highly prized and faithfully attended of the course. The custom has had some notable imitators in America, and I have always been profoundly grateful that most of my professors at Michigan followed this practice as a matter of course. Within the past few years Princeton has been going much further in the work of her "preceptors." Here and there a college librarian

has with more or less success given lectures on the use of the library and on bibliography. If we will consider the literary deluge of the day, the ever growing number of books in our college libraries, we shall perceive the positive necessity for methods differing alike from the indifference and the ways of the past.

To go into details of those methods would be unprofitable here. They have never been worked out with more than fair success, but I think I may say that college librarians and college professors alike are earnestly studying them; are experimenting, and testing ways and means. The college library must deliberately spend thought and money in advertising its wares, and must interpose as few obstacles as possible between its books and its readers.

What should result from such a bibliographic training? How should a young man, equipped as we would have him, face the library and the out-pourings of the press? He should, it seems to me, show first a certain readiness and ease among books; he should treat them all as at least distant acquaintances who may become friends any day. He does not know them, perhaps, but he knows where they live and why they live there, and what they purport to do for a living; and he is not any more surprised than he is with people to learn that some are existing largely on their past reputation; others are leading a double life, and a few are not too reliable or no better than they should

be. Secondly, he should know well and familiarly those directories and those élite lists, social registers if you please, of the world of letters—which tell him both where anybody may be found, or where the best books of any sort dwell. He should—to drop our metaphor—use easily bibliographic tools of all sorts from the simple check list to the erudite works of Fabricius and Poggendorf. And he should *know* the literature of his own subject more than fairly well. Only thus will he become possessed of the historic sense and of the man's attitude toward the printed page. He will realize that books are but imperfect media of arriving at knowledge after all, and that he must put himself into them if he is to profit by them. He will need little assistance from librarians, but will not hesitate to ask questions when he needs help.

Of greater value than any facility in the use of catalogues, bibliographies, and indexes, will be the ability to judge of the comparative merits of books both new and old. If he has learned to read the great reviews, to appreciate to some extent the personal equations of authors, publishers, and reviewers, —not omitting a suspicion of the power of advertising, even in scientific subjects—if he has acquired some criteria for forming judgments of his own, he has gained from the college library, from the college professor, from his fellow students (especially in debate), from his earlier training, an attitude toward books

which defies definition, but which may perhaps be best termed *discriminating*. Such a man cannot be "dated" in later life by the opinions and views of his day in college. He is equipped to cope both with books, and, to a lesser degree, with men.

But highly as I rate the power to work easily and familiarly with books in collections, I am not unaware that there lurk certain serious dangers in this very familiarity and facility. It is the peculiar vice of librarians—even more characteristic than their propensity to talk shop—that as they know intimately the backs of so many books, they are likely to persuade themselves that they know their contents as well. The temptation is subtle and powerful, and its operations are not confined to the custodian of books. Let no one deceive himself into thinking that because he knows the royal road to learning, its guide posts, its directories, its ins and outs, the various vehicles that carry men on it, he is necessarily travelling thereon himself. There is no virtue and no praise in this knowledge, if it is not applied to help either oneself or another to actual progress.

No one is really trained in the use of books who has not made himself master of a few books. His facility in the use of many books should and must leave him the leisure which is needful to absorb certain great works, to read himself into them, to make them part of his very being. What these books should be is not a

matter for dogmatism. One man will feed his soul on Shakespeare, and another on Newton's Principia. But certain works should become a part of the very nature of every man of our race, whatever his profession, who dares call himself educated. The English Bible is still the greatest work in the English tongue. The youth who reaches maturity without a thorough knowledge of its wonderful prose and poetry, and its message of personal religion and of duty toward God and man, has missed the greatest intellectual and moral training the language affords. I care not how he interprets it. Let him *know* the Bible from cover to cover, and consider his own relation to it what he will.

There are other English books, too, which no man can afford not to know, and know intimately. Shakespeare and Milton among the poets; Bacon and Addison and Emerson among essayists; Green, Macaulay, and Parkman among the historians, are but a few of the names which suggest themselves at once. And who dares affirm himself wholly ignorant of Homer and Vergil, of Dante, and of Goethe and Schiller, of Cervantes and of Montaigne? The man who has not as a boy devoted himself to the reading and rereading of at least a few of the world's great books is but poorly prepared to cope with the literary deluge of our day or with the plausible sophistries of the time. He has necessarily a low standard of literary judg-

ment. He has sold his birthright of noble books for a mess of pottage whose chief ingredients are Sunday newspapers and illustrated weeklies.

With this caution, this admonition to think on the high things of the world of letters, I reach my conclusion. He that is faithful to the mastering of a few great books will use easily the tools provided for handling the lesser books. Secure in the possession of some works which the ages have tested, he will welcome the good in the mass of new books, will make the indifferent, or even the bad, serve his need without lowering himself to its level, will show his training in the use of books not alone in the ease with which he masters bookish problems or acquires information, but much more in the character of his thinking and in the standard of his judgments.

CATALOGING AS AN ASSET[1]

It may not be improper to preface this discourse by saying that the subject was assigned by the Director when he asked me to speak to you. I do not know that I should myself have chosen this topic, nor do I feel that my authority to speak on it may be unquestioned. But I am very glad to have this opportunity of a plain word on a proposition which (it would seem to most librarians) should almost go unquestioned. It may be also that I can approach it with less bias than one who is earning his daily bread by cataloging. I am earning mine (in part) by using catalogs, and have been doing so for ten years past. And as a sort of "ultimate consumer" of the cataloger's wares, I may be entitled to say what I think of his product, and of how much value I find it in my daily work.

But before we begin to talk about the relative value of the various phases of the librarian's calling, it is highly desirable that we ask ourselves just what that calling is. I take it that the ultimate goal of most of you as students of this library school is the administration in an organized way of a collection of books for the benefit of a community of some sort.

[1] An address to the New York State Library School, May 1, 1915.

It has been the distinction of this library school that it has produced administrators. If you look at that ambition carefully, you will see that it involves several elements. There is the executive side of a librarian's duties, the successful management of specialists and the adaptation of their product to the community's needs. There is the actual performance of the technical processes of library work, the strictly "professional" side. Successful librarianship is really good engineering. A civil or mechanical, or hydraulic engineer *must* be a scientifically trained man. He must be a capable administrator. Shorn of either part of his equipment, he falls into comparative insignificance, even into failure. Just so the successful librarian is necessarily a compound of technical skill, acquaintance with technical processes, and administrative ability. The mere man of affairs seldom attains complete mastery of any profession. If he did, there would be no need for technical training in schools of any sort. The mere grubber, however faithful, in any technical pursuit seldom blossoms into a capable director of large enterprises. Library work has developed a multitude of technical processes in the last thirty years. Simultaneously it has changed from rather small to rather big undertakings, with large plants, many branches, and budgets of considerable size. In all this, of what value is a knowledge of cataloging?

Instead of attempting to answer this question dogmatically, we may perhaps find it profitable to glance hastily at some phases of what is popularly referred to in professional circles as "the library movement." Those of us whose memory goes back even a quarter of a century or who have studied at all carefully the history of libraries in the United States have seen, or noted, a good many changes. The library world has had its shifting fashions, not to say its fads of the hour. And, just as in more common matters of clothes and manners, the striking novelties are sure to attract a good deal of attention and to get themselves much advertised. In the earlier years of the public library movement, those days before the Centennial and the *Library Journal*, the art of cataloging and the making of catalogs in book form was much honored and much practised. In fact it stood second only to the art and practice of advantageous book-buying. You will find that even very small libraries printed rather elaborate catalogs of their books, catalogs which are now almost forgotten of the foot that passeth by. The larger institutions such as the Astor, the Boston Athenaeum, the Brooklyn Library, not to mention others, brought out catalogs which are still worthy monuments to their compilers. The earlier meetings of the Library Association, the earlier volumes of the *Library Journal* are full of discussions of cataloging practice. Linderfelt and Perkins and Cut-

ter printed separate (and very diverse) codes of rules; and these are but three of a score. It is hard even for a careful student of cataloging to realize how much the practice of the art was simplified and made uniform by this very excess of discussion and effort. Classification and cataloging occupied the major part of the curriculum in the early years of training in library science. They were definite matters which could be taught, and they were controverted subjects which awakened intense partisanship.

In the early nineties it was very evident that there had come to pass a great change in the thought of librarians about their work. Up to the time of the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893 their attention had been—I think we may safely say—largely centered in the internal management of their libraries, on such matters as bookstacks and binding, cataloging and classifying, charging and registration systems. Of course I do not mean that other matters did not occupy thought and receive attention, but we may truly say that the emphasis was on the internal side. In the next few years two other matters began to forge ahead—buildings and library extension. And then followed with almost alarming rapidity a sudden expansion of the activities of the library in every external relation. First the story hour and children's work was the great discovery, then traveling libraries and commission work, then branch libraries sprang up

almost like the dragon's teeth of the fable; work with schools, with clubs, with every form of social organization which could use books. Today it is legislative reference work which is the fad of the hour —destined doubtless to grow into a usefully organized branch of library work, but still unformed, and (tell it not in Gath!) perhaps a trifle self-important and cocksure of its value.

Right in the midst of all this sudden expansion in various directions came the practical realization of the dreams of theorists of an earlier day in the establishment of the Card Distribution work of the Library of Congress. The unifying and clarifying of cataloging method brought about by the long and arduous labors of the American Library Association's Committee on Catalog Rules and the creation of a great central cataloging bureau at Washington mark the opening of the twentieth century in American library history. As the last fifteen years have seen the slow growth of the card stock from nothing to 675,000 titles, so the energy, the will power, the force that used to go into the production of catalog cards in each library have been (to a great degree) turned into other channels. So also has the cataloging product moved along the line of least resistance. The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh is almost the sole large American library that ventures to put out a book catalog. When you come to take account of the

change that has taken place since 1900, it is little short of marvelous. Seventy-five per cent of the cards needed in the various libraries of the country are being supplied by the Library of Congress. It is not unnatural, in fact it is almost inevitable, that there should have come a lessening of interest in cataloging work, and even a dearth of catalogers.

I say this is not unnatural. But it is none the less unfortunate. The successful adaptation of a manufactured product is seldom as interesting as the making itself. The remnant of books for which cards can not be had which must still be laboriously cataloged in each library is not usually the most attractive portion of the yearly accessions. The knotty problems, the intricate questions, the perpetual rendering of decisions which make cataloging an ever fresh and novel game are vanishing with each entry decided and reduced to print at Washington. Bibliography is claiming the attention of those whose bent is toward the strictly bookish side of our calling. Catalogs and catalogers are not in the forefront of library thought. In fact a certain impatience with them and their wares is to be detected in many quarters. Shallow folk are inclined to belittle the whole cataloging business. And there have not been wanting persons to sit in the seat of the scornful.

How true it is that we can not see the wood for the trees! Here we have gone on losing interest in

catalogs, and before our eyes they have grown to amazing proportions. Year by year we have been adding huge numbers of books to all our libraries. We have established more and more branches. We have split up into departments within the library. We have necessarily multiplied records almost without limit. We have office catalogs, shelf lists, card indexes, public catalogs until nobody knows what will be the end. We have continued to use an instrument whose value for small collections is well established, and we have built it up until it fairly threatens to break down of its own size and weight. We have tacitly abandoned catalogs in book form. But we have not seemed to realize that all our skill and all our abilities are now needed to make our huge card catalogs workable. We shall need every bit of energy, vigor, and knowledge that we possess to adapt the card catalog to libraries in the future. Instead of releasing us from an obligation, instead of making the proper record of our books a matter of mere routine, the universal use of the printed cards demands of us librarians new zeal, new skill, and an added technique. Problems of selection, of arrangement, of display, of interpretation of the catalog are pressing hard upon us. The cataloger must be an administrator if he is to meet the needs of the future: and the administrator can not afford to be ignorant of these problems of cataloging, which must be solved.

Perhaps I may bring this home to you with more force by some consideration of the practical use of catalogs. For it is as a working tool that I would have you consider the catalog. It is not primarily a record—remember that! Libraries keep some sort of accessions record for business ends. But they make catalogs for the use of their readers. The point is vital. Unless you think of the catalog as an instrument, you lose entirely the point of view of modern cataloging practice. It is an instrument whereby one can find out—if he knows how—whether the library has a book he wants, or whether it has any books on some topic he is interested in. It may be used for scores of other purposes, but these two are the prime reasons for its existence.

Now no instrument can always be worked easily, safely and successfully by the chance comer. Herein lies much of the difficulty found in the use of card catalogs.

For who uses a card catalog? For whom is it made? This is the real *crux* of much of the current discussion of the merits—and failings—of that machine. Obviously it is not for the way-faring man: equally obviously not for the child just entering school. Clearly persons who wish to read or study some definite book or some subject are the normal users of card catalogs. For the idle or the curious browser these are the open shelves; for the fiction

seeker, the finding list and more open shelves; for the child, the children's room; for the man in haste, the reference collection and its attendants. What a change from a generation ago! I remember too well my despair at searching an author catalog for "something to read" on a Saturday night in my Alma Mater's library, where were no open shelves, no circulation, no reference collection, and no lists of fiction. Is it not plain that these developments of the past twenty years have accompanied the supplanting of the old book catalog and finding list and their replacement by the card catalog? Is it not a perfectly fair statement that in the users of a card catalog there may be presumed some modicum of intelligence and a more than passing interest in some topic? I do not believe that the card catalog can ever be made so easy of operation, especially in this day of huge libraries, that every chance comer can handle it successfully without some instruction. Nor is it intended primarily for the curious or the hurried reader. It is a tool demanding some deftness in its use. More than that, for most inquiries reaching beyond the stage of the merely obvious, it is a most complicated instrument requiring great skill and long practice in the searcher.

But why is the catalog a complex and difficult instrument? Why is it not simple and easy to operate? Why should it not be so sensibly made that the way-

faring man—though a fool—need not err therein? What are catalogers, anyway, that they set up rules and practices difficult for the ordinary man to follow? These and such like other questions are always with us. They are insistently put forward. They must be met, even in a library school.

There is just one plain and truthful answer to these questions. Catalogs are complex because people and books are complex. Catalogs are not simple, because people and books are not simple. If each book were written by one person, who never changed his name from the way it appeared on the title page of his first book; if each book were published at some plainly designated place and on a date explicitly set forth; if there were but one edition permitted; if there were no societies, clubs, universities, journals, academies, legislatures, governments issuing books; if all reprints, separates, and pre-prints could be prevented, then, and only then, might catalogs become simple—on their author side. But you all know, everybody knows, that the reverse of this is the actual state of things. Go to your order department and scan the first truckload you meet of books coming in. Unless you find a batch of current novels just from the press, I venture to say you will find that half the truck-load, at least, can not be cataloged "simply." Every possible variety and mode of publication will meet you in any large library. Divergent forms of sur-

name, and of forename; governmental, institutional and society publications; serials and series; newspapers and magazines; reprints, new editions, translations, abridgments, commentaries; official and non-official reports; dissertations and programs; authors dead a couple of thousand years, and others just beginning to write; a jumble of every possible sort of responsibility for the appearance of things in print. And somehow these must be treated with a degree of uniformity and common sense which shall make it an easy task to rush to the catalog and identify any one of them!

But what of the subject side? Can that be treated "simply?" Again apply the test of experiment. Go over your truck-load of new books. Remember that the subjects you are going to assign to them must fit in with those already given to thousands of other books now in the library. Remember also that the subject-headings assigned must strike an average between the needs of the specialist and the novice. And more, that you must keep in mind the writer's point of view as well. Is this any easy task to be turned off in a half-hour by any "sensible" person? You will find it much harder than the job of deciding who wrote the books. I repeat, the complexity of cataloging at the present day arises from the complicated and involved problems presented by the books themselves. The rules and the practice are

vastly simpler than they were sixty years ago. If you don't believe me, try to apply Panizzi's Rules to the next set of books you come on, and contrast the result with that of the American Library Association's Rules.

One of the favorite arguments of certain folk who think cataloging an expensive and much over-lauded luxury of the profession is that book-sellers and auctioneers make perfectly intelligible catalogs at a very low cost. Now I have been checking and searching such catalogs for many years, and I venture to say that as a rule they are the worst made product of the cataloger's art. Their careless entries, their suppression of names, their inaccurate proof-reading render it almost impossible at times to discover the fact that you really have the book advertised. It requires a specially developed detective ability to unearth the actual book hidden beneath their frequently seductive entries. Every large library has paid dearly for the errors of the book-sellers' "simple" cataloging. And every such library develops a set of assistants who can "search" the catalog for alluring items to the great benefit of the library's purse. You can not, then, do order work (and a large share of reference work) successfully unless you are particularly well versed not only in cataloging as conducted in your own library, but as it has been practiced by generations of book-sellers and bibliographers.

I might go on to show that in almost every branch of library work a knowledge of cataloging is practically essential. From the moment a book is suggested for purchase until it lands in the hands of the first reader there are a number of processes to be gone through, as you of course know. Almost all of these (save the merely mechanical) call for an acquaintance with rules of entry, increasing with the size of the library and the complexity of its contents. In the other processes of administering the books added to the collection a knowledge of cataloging is equally important. But it is in reference work particularly that a thorough knowledge of cataloging counts. I can not state too strongly the need for reference workers who are trained catalogers. When I hear any one in my force begin to say "*they* do so and so" in speaking of the catalog and its makers, I despair of him. Unless his thought (and his word) is "the *rule* is so and so," he has not the root of the matter in him. Up to a certain point one may do fairly good reference work without resorting to the catalog, but that point is reached very quickly in a modern library. Perhaps you do not realize the difficulty of ascertaining that a book wanted is, or is not, in your library. It may seem an easy matter enough, requiring only a glance at a few cards. But even in a small library this is not always certain, and in a moderately large one it is always dangerous to say that a book asked for is

not owned by the institution. The longer I work, the more do I respect the rule (which we rigidly enforce in the Library of Congress Reading Room[2]) against giving a negative answer as to our possession of a certain book. There are so many possibilities which lurk concealed in the form of the question, the intricacies of the catalog, the lack of knowledge of the searcher! It is but seldom that you have all the elements in the problem within your control when you begin your search. If you find the book, well and good. But if you don't, the problem bristles with queries. Is the name of the author correctly spelled? Is he really the author? Is the title right? Is it possible that the book is part of a set not yet analyzed in the catalog? Has a magazine article been asked for under the impression that it is a book? Can you find a correct description of the book (to settle a few of these doubts) in some other catalog or index? Is it a book too new to have been received and cataloged? These are but a few of the questions you must ask yourself before you dare say "*No, it isn't here.*" A reference assistant who doesn't know how to use his own and other catalogs is practically worthless.

But I do not ask you to accept this opinion without proof. Take a couple of representative inquiries

[2] When this address was delivered the author was Superintendent of the Reading Room in the Library of Congress, and drew freely on his experience in illustration of the arguments advanced.

received within a few weeks as illustrative of thousands. An historian working on early California history came to me recently, lamenting that we did not have a copy of a book frequently cited in works he was using as *Viage de Sutil y Mexicaña eñ el año de 1792. Madrid, 1802.* No entry was found under Sutil or Mexicana in our catalogs, old or new. "But," said I to myself, "Mexicana is feminine. It probably can't be even a compound Spanish name of a person. Must be a ship since this is a voyage. Let's look at the British Museum Catalog, which has a comfortable fashion of neglecting no proper names found on title pages. Sure enough! Here it is: Mexicana (Ship) see *Relacion del viage de Sutil y Mexicana,* etc. C. Valdés is given in brackets after the "Mexicana," perhaps her commander, perhaps the author. Let's look at Valdés in our cards. Here it is: "Valdés, Flores Bazán y Peón, Cayetano. . . . . *See* Espinosa y Tello, José. *Relacion de Viage de Sutil,* etc. Two copies!" Now I call your attention to two facts. First, that the Library of Congress catalog had a title entry for "*Relacion de viage,*" and had the title been quoted accurately the book would have been found at once. Second, in the fear of too many entries, of making the catalog too complicated, the cataloger had violated one of the plainest rules and there had not been made added entries for the names of the ships. There were five

added entries without them. The result of knowing the habits of the British Museum Catalog was that the book was found in ten minutes from the time the inquiry was made.

Take another case: A Senator telephoned over that he wanted the report made by Justice Hughes on the Railway Mail Service; he didn't know when or where, but it was since he became a Justice of the Supreme Court. This proved a poser. Of course there was no entry under Hughes, nor did *Who's Who* mention in its modest account this particular service. It merely gave a *terminus a quo*, for it said he was appointed to the Supreme Count in 1910. Clearly here was a report concealed somewhere in a government document, so the Document Catalog and Supplements were put into requisition. No results; nothing under Hughes, or Railway Mail Service. But a hazy recollection that there had been a Congressional row over second class mail matter led me to look at that subject. Still no help, but a little "See also" reference to "Postal Commission" at the end sent me to our cards under United States. Postal Commission. Here I found cards for the old commission of the nineties, and at the very end, an added entry referring to a message from the President to Congress, transmitting a Report of the Postmaster General which, when sent for, proved to contain the Report of the Commission on Second Class Mail

Matter, headed by Mr. Justice Hughes. This took half an hour. And without a knowledge of cataloging rules (particularly those of the Documents Office) it never would have been found—unless we had telephoned over to Justice Hughes' Office and asked about it—and you couldn't do that when he was on the bench listening to argument and the Senator wanting his document at once.

It is clear enough, then, that reference librarians must know well cataloging principles and practice. But so must all workers who have to do with library records. Consider the problems presented by the need of keeping track of books scattered in the branches of a modern public library. What a complicated thing is a modern "union shelf list," a "combined catalog!" And how near we are to the day of union catalogs or "repertories" designed to show the resources of cities, or regions, perhaps of the entire country! Can you imagine anyone unversed in practical cataloging undertaking to supervise such records? I venture to predict that inside of ten years we shall have in Washington a card record of practically all the important books in that city. Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, and the State of Indiana have produced printed lists of serial publications on file in their libraries. Union lists of *all* books in sharply defined fields (as books in Chinese) are even nor projected—perhaps almost completed. The future

is a day of coöperation, and coöperation in most cases on the common basis of one set of cataloging rules governing a supply of contributed entries. You will begin to see something of the value of those rules, of your practical work at cataloging. It is not drudgery. It is not wasted effort. In studying cataloging you have been learning the grammar of your calling, the tools of your trade, which will be taken for granted in the conduct of large enterprises, in the planning of successful librarianship.

If, then, a knowledge of cataloging is a very practical necessity for a trained librarian—through by no means his sole necessary equipment, I hasten to add, lest we fall into exaggeration—it would seem to follow naturally that the courses in that subject in library schools should prove one of the most profitable and practical parts of the curriculum. Far be it from me to criticize the manner in which instruction in cataloging is presented! But I have a feeling that the method of approach on the part of both instructors and pupils has in many cases left something to be desired. The reader's point of view and the administrative point of view have been, I venture to say, rather frequently and unfortunately neglected in the instruction. Here are codes of rules to be taught, here are certain practices, certain devices to be inculcated. The time is short and the devious ways of markers of books are legion. The minutiae and

the mechanics of cataloging (which *must* be acquired!) naturally loom large in the eyes of the teacher. And on the other hand the pupil is rather apt to be impatient of so much detail, so many rules, so many exceptions, so much that is plainly drudgery. But if both keep in mind the reader and his needs, the task imposed by the very mass and variety of the books to be listed in due and orderly fashion; if the very human inquiries of the one, and the imperative demands made by the budget on the other, are never lost sight of, the study of cataloging will, I fancy, take on a fresh and perennial interest.

Again, I think I am safe in saying that most students in library schools would rather do anything else than take up cataloging on graduation. They are all for administration, for reference work, for the charge of branches or of departments. This is perfectly natural. But not all desires of the natural man, if we may trust St. Paul, are both wise and good. If I were planning for the best sort of experience as a training for later work, I would urge *most* library school students on graduation to spend a couple of years in the cataloging department of some good-sized library. I do not know anything more valuable in the way of training in accuracy, in observation, in judgment, and in general library skill than such practical work in cataloging. In my own work I should prefer graduates with such experience even to persons

of the same equipment who had had a couple of years practice in reference work. And I am sure that as a foundation for later service in charge of a library the practical benefit would be very great. Persons who have been thrust into the control of libraries can seldom comprehend the real difficulties and needs of the work. They are either disposed to cut expenses to the great detriment of the service, or helplessly to allow the technical processes to remain a mystery not to be too closely looked into. But the librarian who has served his time at classifying, cataloging, or ordering books is never helpless or mystified in the face of library technique. Nor is he ignorant of its real needs and its true value.

May I be permitted a word of personal reminiscence? I was pitched into library work twenty years ago almost without warning, and wholly without technical library training, although I fancy I had fortunately seen more of the inside of libraries than most youngsters of twenty-four. I had entertained large bibliographical plans at the university, and in company with another enthusiast had combed the "Berichte" of the Berlin and Vienna Academies of Sciences for all articles on classical philology. We left the cards for these articles as a pious legacy to the Classical Seminar at Michigan. (I wonder what became of them?) Now my first task as a librarian was to catalog the whole of Von Gebhardt und Har-

nack's *Texte und Untersuchungen;* and precious little guidance for that job did I then find in Cutter's Rules, my sole aid. But I found out all about contents, series, monographs, translators, editors, commentators, and subject cards for the lot. I had to. It was a case of sink or swim. I don't know what sort of entries I produced, but I do know that the professors had no difficulty in finding those books. And nothing in the way of cataloging has ever seemed an impossible task to me since. Perhaps I am led to over-estimate the value of cataloging experience because I have had so much of it from the very beginning of my work as a librarian. But I covet that experience for others.

Moreover, there are certain indirect results of the study and practice of cataloging which I must at least name. The extremely difficult task of correctly describing a book or a document becomes from repetition and criticism practically a habit. The work breeds a truly accurate habit of mind, at least so far as the observation and noting of certain externals go. Likewise, a cataloger is not ordinarily at a loss in an effort to locate a book, or to identify a citation. This ability is worth much. Scores of abbreviated book titles come to us every day, and it is persons with a good knowledge of cataloging who most readily interpret them. Every librarian has to use the tools of his trade, and they are every day getting more com-

plicated. Bibliographies of all sorts are more easily used by one who has had cataloging training than by others, particularly card bibliographies. The day is coming when most library records will be on cards, and when one set of rules for entry (the cataloging rules) will govern most of these records. Finally, let no one underrate the value of the cataloger's acquaintance with reference books. Not only does he perforce learn to use them—he learns to sit in judgment on them, to adopt a critical and discriminating attitude toward them and their makers, for he uses them for his own needs, not (as does the reference worker) for the needs of others. These indirect benefits of cataloging practice are worth perhaps as much or more than the obvious training in one line of work.

There is a certain pathetic element of transitoriness and instability about the librarian's calling. His work is for the day, the hour. No visible monument is ordinarily erected by his labors. Readers come and go, are served and aided, and others surge forward the next day. Books are bought, arranged and marshalled for the needs of one generation, and the next rearranges them to meet its own wants. There is no element of permanence in a classification system, for instance. In the very nature of things there can not be, for a grouping of books which suits one time and place can not suffice for another set of readers and another view of life. But the accurate and faithful

description of a book according to a known code does abide. Didbin's entries are as good for purposes of identification as Proctor's or Pellechet's. The item in the Boston Athenaeum Catalog is as useful as that in the A. L. A. Book List or on the Library of Congress Card. The cards written here in Albany and put in the catalog have a permanent value. Even if they are replaced by a printed entry, it is the same entry, perhaps in a trifle fuller form. In cataloging, then, there is an element of stability and permanence which carries a certain inner satisfaction that is very real. *Non omnis moriar* can be said of each cataloger's work. That at least is an asset in a world of change.

And what of the future? Are we to have practically the same sort of catalogs as in the past? Are there no signs of change? He would be a rash man who would predict, and I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet. But some things are very plain even to a reference librarian who is not a cataloger. We have just begun, in America, an era of huge libraries. The average size is increasing very fast. Our large libraries are getting very large. They are being run for wide constituencies on broad lines. More and more the practical American spirit is seeking for coördination and coöperation. It is by no means certain that the card form of catalog will continue indefinitely as the chief tool of library workers. It is highly probable that selected catalogs will take the

place of huge general repertories for most purposes. Dimly one can see possibilities of mechanical changes and alterations, of the use of photography, instead of printer's ink, possibilities of compression or even total change of form. Certainly our present card catalogs will require intelligent direction of the highest order to make them respond to the demands of readers, to the needs of the community. Changes such as these will require an intelligent and sympathetic oversight to insure their success. The librarians who will carry them out, who will guide and mold the development of cataloging, must perforce have been experienced and trained catalogers.

And here we come back to our beginning, to your aim as students of library science. If you are to administer libraries, you must know libraries, you must be able to work your machine, you must have practical knowledge of its parts. Nothing in the craft should be foreign to you, least of all the art of cataloging.

THE THEORY OF REFERENCE WORK[1]

One of the commonest phenomena in the growth of a language is the unconscious development of technical phrases. Words which have a plain and ordinary meaning, universally understood and used, are given a special turn or a peculiar import in some locality or in some occupation. In a highly developed form of civilization in which communication is rapid and intercourse constant such special and peculiar meanings spread quickly and become current before people are aware either of the fact or the process. Every calling and profession has its own jargon, perfectly intelligible to the initiate, though but half understood by the rest of the world. And in a singularly democratic country, one in which governmental decrees fixing nomenclature are practically unknown (for the reason that the central government has no concern with local matters) the jargon of a trade or a profession may become fixed without any particular attention from anyone. Coined words, as the verbs "to accession," "to shelf-list," are in all conscience bad enough, but chief of the startling and novel crop

[1] *Bulletin of the American Library Association*, 1915, v. 9, p. 134–139, Proceedings of the Berkeley Conference.

of new phrases in our calling is the term "reference librarian."

To the curious I commend the task of tracing in the library press and in library reports the history of this designation. It would make a good subject for a seminar paper. But whatever its history, the term has arrived. It meets me in half a dozen letters a day. I find persons signing themselves "reference librarian" writing from colleges and universities, from public libraries, from endowed research libraries, from state and governmental libraries. These libraries are large and small, general and special, but they all have a person styled a "reference librarian," and in their reports we will find paragraphs on "reference" work, "reference" books, "reference" rooms, and so on. But a study of the functions performed by these persons and in these departments leave me with the impression that the terms are used rather loosely, that the duties performed by "reference workers" are by no means the same in all libraries. Observation also leads me to believe that the term covers functions ranging from the practical control of all the relations with the public (in certain non-circulating libraries) down to the mere task of keeping order in a college study room. Before beginning any discussion of reference work, then, there is need, even among librarians, for a certain amount of definition.

Reference work, as defined in this paper, is the

service rendered by a librarian *in aid* of some sort of study. It is not the study itself—that is done by the reader. Reference work is ordinarily distinguished from circulation work in libraries, although reference work may, and often does, lead to the sort of circulation librarians profess an ardent desire to further. The help given to a reader engaged in research of any sort is what we mean by reference work. It may be aid of the most trivial sort, as in the finding of a name in a city directory, or of the most elaborate character, as the preparation of extensive lists of references such as those printed by the Division of Bibiliography in the Library of Congress, or by the New York Public Library. But it is primarily help given to a reader, not performance of the reader's task. Reference work, then, is in aid of research, but it is not research itself.

"Reference" librarians, it should follow, are employees assigned to the task of assisting readers in the prosecution of their studies. They are the interpreters of the library to the public. The books are here on the shelves; the machinery of library operation (catalogs, files, and what not) is ready: here are readers, each with his own need. But without some one to help a little, to explain, to suggest, to direct, the right book, the right article does not always fall into the reader's hands. The expert and the tyro alike bring their difficulties to the man who can help

them with his knowledge—*not* of the topic, but of the machinery. He does not, he can not, be an expert in many and various fields. But he does know books and library methods. He can refer people to the right place in the catalog, the proper section of the shelves; he is able to solve baffling puzzles in the way of abbreviated or incomplete titles, and he knows more than a little of what books his library owns. He is the interpreter of the library to readers, revealing not that which he himself has created, but that which has been gathered, arranged, listed, labeled, and shelved against their needs. The reference librarian has always existed. It is only of recent years that division of labor has given him a name—without his knowledge or consent, as for the most part names are wont to be bestowed.

"Reference books," too, have taken on a new and dubious meaning. Formerly the term was restricted to works of an encyclopædic character, to books of ready reference. Dictionaries, almanacs, catalogs, cyclopædias, compendia, were reference books. Now (in libraries) to these have been added other books placed in reading rooms with the view of keeping them there for the convenience of readers. Reference books we generally hold to mean books in the reference rooms, or reading rooms, which are not ordinarily subject to circulation. Other books to which the old definition applies and which may not

be in the reference rooms still receive the old designation. Bayle's Dictionary, for example, would doubtless be considered a reference book even by the ruthless modernist who consigns it to the stack and never revels in the spicy anecdotes, the keen thrusts of its heretical author. I find also (not among librarians) a disposition to term "reference" books *any* books to which reference is made in syllabi and reading lists. Time and again I have seen letters asking about "reference" books, which proved to be very ordinary and commonplace text-books, or monographs. To librarians, however, the term doubtless conveys its old meaning of compends for quick consultation and has come to include also such other books as experience has placed at the convenience of reference workers and readers in reading rooms.

The modern extension of this word reference is further seen in the phrases "reference rooms" and "reference library." These are set over against circulation departments and lending libraries. As a rule, it is the smaller libraries which use the term "reference room," or "reference department." The larger libraries, which subdivide their work in aid of readers, are more likely to use the term "reading rooms," particularly as they probably have half a dozen departments for specialized aid of research. A technical reading and study room, for instance, is not ordinarily referred to as a "reference room," but

"department of technology." "Reference libraries" are a group apart. Their function is primarily the aid of specialized, of advanced research. Considering the great number of libraries and the money spent on them in America, the group is a very small one as yet, but as notable as it is small. There is moreover, small question as to the meaning of the word when applied to them. Reference in their case spells research.

Whether or no these definitions find common acceptance, there can be no question as to one fact which confronts anyone planning reference work for any particular library. Most of our libraries are open twelve to fourteen hours daily, and for a shorter period on Sunday. The average library employee is not present more than eight hours a day. Obviously this means, save in very small libraries, a certain duplication of force and division of labor in the reference work. This at once implies a certain amount of organization and planning in its conduct. The mere assignment of a probably suitable person to the reference desk is of course not enough. There must be some continuity in the work, some assurance that the man coming at night will get as good service as the man who came in the morning. In other words reference work demands a policy on the part of the librarian, a definite plan as to what is expected from it, and the means to be applied toward it. Even if

it has grown up of itself after its own fashion, the very success it has achieved requires a careful analysis and a plan for continuation. We have given great attention to buying books, to cataloging and classifying them, to building up circulation, to bringing the books home to the people, to providing buildings. The reference work demands the same sort of care and thought.

Another very obvious fact is that no one person can possibly have special knowledge of the wide variety of subjects on which libraries have books. It is almost inevitable that, even in a library of moderate size, some one else than the reference librarian may be the best person to assist a particular inquirer. In a large library in which specialists are necessarily gathered, it is highly probable that the special department or the specialist in some department, rather than the reference librarian should attend to his need. The reader "is entitled to the best aid in the library's staff." Thus on any theory of reference work, the reference librarian is bound by a self-denying ordinance. Not his service merely, but the best service, he is to put at the reader's disposal. He is to be a guide not alone to the books, but to the library's resources in personnel. This principle also pre-supposes a policy on the part of the library as a whole toward the reference work.

That policy will differ according to the nature of

the demands made upon the library and the extent of its resources. There are, speaking very broadly, three sorts of demands in ordinary reference work, the inquiry for historico-literary information of every sort, the inquiry about present-day conditions in social and economic fields, and the inquiry in special fields of knowledge, such as technical chemistry or electricity, or law. The historic (or antiquarian) demand is the most familiar and probably the most frequent in large libraries; the social (contemporary) demand is the most insistent and difficult to satisfy; the technical demand (when serious) is usually made in a technical library, or by a person already trained who is capable of handling for himself the technical books. Now the general library is usually either strong in history, literature and the arts, or strong in statistics, documents, and sociology. It is seldom so evenly developed (for whatever reason—many will occur to you at once) in all fields that none has a preponderance. The equipment and training of the reference workers should, it would seem, reflect the strongest side of the library's collections, at least up to the point where those collections require the services of specialists. For example, suppose a library has a good collection of music which is growing rapidly as a result of an endowment. Ultimately it will need a specialist in musical literature in charge of the collection. Until the time comes for him, however, it

would be folly not to have some one on the reference staff—or at least available for reference work—who knows more than a little of music and its literature.

But if the reference librarian is not to absorb inquiries at the reference desk, if he is properly to consider himself an introducer of readers to the person best able to assist them, he is also required by this very obligation to sift inquiries, to discover those, for instance, which can be answered by means of the World Almanac, or Who's Who, and to prevent them going past him to bother and annoy busy folk. We have at the Library of Congress a department of Semitics. But we have learned in the Reading Room to spot the young Egyptians and Syrians who wish to read the files of our one Arabic illustrated magazine, and not to let them get past the Reading Room desk to the Semitic Department. If the question can be handled with reasonable ease and celerity by the reference force, it should remain with them. Tact, the ability to single out the actual thing wanted in the haze of the first questions, a good memory, knowledge of catalogs and of classifications, are the prime requisites in a "reference" librarian. Added to them must be—as indicated above—an acquaintance with some field in which the library is particularly strong, and in which there is a persistent demand. Experience, too, counts for more in reference work than almost any other factor, particularly experience

in the library in which the work is done. Time and again I have seen reference workers made wise by long years of training handle with consummate ease and success an inquiry which had baffled inexperienced folk of excellent, even superior, training. The acquaintance with the library's resources which comes from living in it, the knowledge of how similar questions were met before, the curious ability to sense the real point at issue, are assets which come with time alone.

We shall not attempt in this paper to take up the practical matters of *how* such reference librarians shall perform their manifold and varied duties. The topic is the *theory* of reference work, which involves of course the attitude of the library toward it, and the qualifications of those engaged in it, as well as the preliminary discussion of its nature. But the tools of the reference worker and his quarters we may properly include within the theory of his work. Whether the force be large or small, whether the work be general or special, the reference librarian must have some special place to work in and some things to work with. (I have seen both fundamentals totally ignored.)

To begin with his tools. In a general sense the entire reference collection is for his use in aiding readers, but it is the books and apparatus which he uses personally with great frequency that more

immediately concern us. These should be near at hand where they can be reached with little motion. No matter what his particular line of work there are sure to develop lists and bibliographies, memoranda and notes. Some sort of record is naturally kept of particularly difficult and puzzling inquiries. He will need a vertical file for all these, and if the demand for ephemeral publications on questions of the hour and the place is strong, his vertical file is likely to grow to large dimensions. He will need as many works of quick reference as he can get about him, dictionaries, indexes, compends of statistics, recent bibliographies, directories and so on. These are his first aids, his emergency tools.

His next line of help is not so often the general collection of reference books as it is the catalog of the library. If that instrument is at all well made, it is the natural resort of the reference librarian in almost all his emergencies. He probably will know it more thoroughly than anyone except the filers. It would seem almost a necessity that he should not be placed far from it, and yet we have all seen reference rooms remote from the public catalog, even on separate floors.

Then come the reference books in the reference room, open to readers freely, and distinctly for their use but in a peculiar sense also the tools of the reference librarian. Reference collections should be made

with local ends in view. While one may with safety and wisdom foresee a demand and provide reference books for it, the bulk of the reference books should be such as experience shows to be needed in that particular place. Because a book is very useful in some large library, it is by no means certain that it will prove an equally valuable reference aid in a small town library or in a special library. Reference collections, moreover, should contain a certain number of duplicates. Experience will show what they shall be. My plea is that the reference collection should be made up strictly in accordance with local needs, guided by the reference librarian's observations and his knowledge of the demand. It goes without saying that it will require constant and drastic revision.

Such are the tools of the trade. How should they be housed? No details can be given, but certain principles may be at least mentioned. The reference room must be near the public catalog; it must not be remote from the book stacks. There should be (even in small libraries) some provision for privacy of consultation when necessary. It is extremely difficult to have no place to take an embarrassed inquirer, no place to consult on what may be very important matters other than the open reference room. Some study rooms where groups can work adjacent to the main reference room seem also a necessity. Debaters and clubs we are likely to have with us for

some time to come. Further details are matters of the individual building.

Assuming, then, that we are agreed that reference work is organized effort on the part of libraries in aid of the most expeditious and fruitful use of their books, under comfortable housing conditions, we may safely inquire whether its possibilities have been explored, its limits reached. Have we yet done all that can be done properly to exploit the books in our libraries, to develop their use to the utmost? Is it not true that we are but beginning to see the possibilities of useful service which can be rendered to the community, not alone by the existence of rich collections, of carefully selected libraries, but by the trained and organized force which interprets them? Is it not imperative that we abandon (if we have ever held) the passive attitude, politely responsive to demands, but creating none? Consider for a moment the attitude of the so-called "special" library toward its clients. Because of their high intelligence in some special field, of their keen interest in the literature of their calling, the clients of such a library demand and secure highgrade service within that field, a service which generally sets itself no limits of time or effort on behalf of its readers. Zeal in such a library does not degenerate into officiousness, nor does proper reserve become indifference. The librarians of a scientific laboratory, of an insurance company, of a

research institute know their limited clientele, anticipate their wants, respond to their calls, serve intelligently, and therefore successfully.

Even so, general libraries may perhaps establish a relation of intimacy with at least certain sections or classes of their larger community. By a study of its component parts, of its social orgnization there have already been found in many cities possibilities of helpful aid to many classes of readers who ordinarily come but seldom to any library. Such a study of a town or city one supposes every librarian makes in a general way. But the reference workers in large and small public libraries are under special obligation to consider not only those daily demands which custom and training bring to their desks, but all those latent chances of usefulness which lie too frequently undreamt of about them. Why buy certain classes of books? Why keep other classes? Who can use this sort, and who that? Why not develop a certain subject for a certain need, even if it be hitherto unvoiced? Why not spend on the study of the possible and actual use of books some of the energy shown in selecting fiction and reading reviews? In other words, why not exploit intelligently and successfully the non-recreative side of library work, building up stores of books against a future need, gathering ephemeral material for the day?

The possibilities of reference work in reference

libraries are, I believe, but dimly seen as yet. Judging from our foremost examples, one might say that the keynote is specialization, either by way of departments within a general library, as the New York Public Library, or by limiting the field of the library itself, as in the John Crerar Library, or the John Carter Brown Library. But specialization means planning for the student, the investigator, fully as much as for the librarian assigned to the care of a department. It means a policy of acquisition in special fields, a development of a special clientele, a specialized service which can create a demand as well as supply one. The mere library specialist, who sits in a room and gathers books about him, performs a service of a certain sort, it is true. But the specialist in American history, in prints, in maps, in music, in physics, in law, in statistics, who keeps in touch with the men of his sort throughout the world, who knows them, knows what is going on, contributes his mite, brings them eagerly about him, fills a vastly more important post. We have men of this sort, and we shall have more of them as our libraries grow. They are alive. They are the true reference workers, whatever their official nomenclature.

And the general "reference librarian," the man who is compelled to be all things to all men, who, counting nothing and no one trivial, spends his days opening up to the miscellaneous public the stores of the

library's books, what of him? He sends the interesting inquiry on to the specialist; he passes on the interesting man to another head of department; he greets generations of students in high schools, colleges, normal schools, technical schools; he helps out the hurried newspaper man hunting desperately for a portrait or a biography of some one sprung into fame between editions; he sets the aspiring Daughter of the American Revolution on the track of a new bar; here he averts a difficulty, there he smooths down an irate reader with too often a just grievance; he is an interpreter, revealing to inquirers what the library has; he is a lubricant, making the wheels run noiselessly and well. Little glory and less reputation accrue to him. He counts his days' work done well, but sees no tally of so many thousand books bought or other thousands cataloged. At his best scholars use him, like him, thank him. At his lowest ebb no one considers him save as a useful part of the machinery. This is the theory of his work—service, quiet, self-effacing, but not passive or unheeding. To make books useful, and more used,—this is his aim. This aim and this theory are alike honored in any gathering of librarians.

LEADERSHIP THROUGH LEARNING[1]

This is the commencement season. Up and down the land in the past three weeks thousands of young people have assembled for their final exercises in school and college and university. Hundreds of commencement orations, perfervid or quiet, hortatory or reflective, have been addressed to fond parents and their graduating offspring, while teachers and professors have listened with a touch of wearied reminiscence to well-worn truth, to lofty aspiration, to solemn admonition. Diverse as these addresses have been, different in quality, in manner and in topic, it is probably safe to say that one reflection, one phrase has been absent from no one of them. Whatever his theme, whatever his purpose, it is a poor commencement orator who does not at some moment of his discourse address the graduates as "the future leaders of the community." Nay more, it is on this postulate of future leadership that most of the solemn warning of responsibility and the ardent exhortation to serious use of training and of the fruits of study is grounded. To the coming leaders of thought, of action does the commencement orator

[1] Read at Asbury Park Conference of the American Library Association. *Bulletin of the American Library Association*, July, 1916.

appeal. Not to those who will prove average American citizens or commonplace voters and toilers are his eloquent periods addressed. They are, so generations have been told, the choice spirits who shall lead the hosts, shall guide the republic, shall mold the destinies of nations yet unborn.

With what sardonic inward grins and grimaces do old and worldly-wise teachers listen to these familiar phrases! And in how many audiences have the real powers that be, snatching a hasty hour from business in deference to paternal interest or maternal pride, instinctively muttered derisive comment on the foolishness of the wise men. For both sorts—the veteran teacher and the real leader of men—diverse as are their aims and their outlook on life—know by bitter experience that while many are called, few are chosen. A generation hence it may well be true—and probably will be—that our leaders are mainly school and college bred. It is not so now, nor has it ever been so in the history of this republic. While our universities count their presidents and their distinguished senators and representatives by scores, there have been hundreds of equal power and weight who have known no academic halls or scholastic training—to say nothing of the men in the background who made them all presidents and senators and representatives. While our technical schools have turned out great engineers, railroad builders, masters of in-

dustry, it is not from them that Harriman, Westinghouse, Carnegie, Rockefeller, Ford, Edison graduated, but from the hard school of business and industry. What man who will run over the list of those who have truly led thought and action in our country from its beginnings on this shore to its achievements on the Pacific can affirm that scholastic training produced all these leaders? Some of them it did produce,—and we may thank God for them,—Jefferson, Hamilton, the Adamses, Madison, Webster, Sumner, Roosevelt and Wilson. But no college counts among its alumni Washington, Marshall, Clay, Jackson and Lincoln. Least of all is it true that the majority of our school and college graduates become leaders of men.

Why is this so? We are all agreed that the education received in college and professional school leaves on men and women a stamp of quality and fineness. We are convinced beyond possibility of doubt that without formal education the attainment of certain valued and almost vital attributes is generally so difficult as to be almost impossible. Even those very men who by reason of native force and ability, by sheer pluck and unending toil, have reached posts of leadership and large usefulness without formal education are as a rule most anxious that their sons and daughters shall have the very training they have lacked. None of us belittles or derides formal training; least of all the librarian of a university.

But if there be this gap between expectation and result, if our colleges and schools do not train leaders as such, where *are* our leaders trained and what school produces them? We are, said Mr. Lowell. the "most common-schooled people on earth"—"and," he added, "the least educated." His observation will not always be true, but there still remains ample justification for it. It is the school of experience, the laboratory of business, the seminar of competition that produce the real leaders of opinion and of action. And in our universities it is probably contact with his fellows that brings into consciousness a man's qualities of leadership rather than instruction in classes and lecture rooms. One of President Wilson's keenest observations on university life was his dictum that fully as much education was going on between the hours of four in the afternoon and eight in the morning as between eight and four. It is a matter of common observation that the leaders of student opinon and action are but seldom those whose class standing is of the first rank. The intense specialization of our day in all our universities doubtless contributes to this failure to develop qualities of leadership. Few undergraduates—or graduate students, for that matter,—combine high attainments in one field with comprehensive grasp of many fields, or unite scholarship with an ability to meet many men on terms of equality and intelligence.

And yet no lasting and effective leadership is found which is not based on knowledge. A moment's reflection will convince anyone of this elemental truth. Take our own calling, for instance; this very A. L. A. of ours. We have had our leaders, and of most of them we have been proud—and justly. To mention only the dead—who will deny sound learning and high attainment to Cutter, Winsor, Poole, Thwaites, Larned, Spofford, Billings? Somehow these men, and others like them, combined a rare knowledge of their profession with an ability to use that knowledge effectively. They not only knew, but they *knew how*. So it is in almost any field. It is the man who knows and who knows how that stands at the top. Even in the realm of politics, that most hopeless of all callings from the scholar's viewpoint, it is the man who knows the ins and outs of the game, who knows *men*, and knows how to work the machine, that commands followers and gets results. Leadership is a combination of certain personal qualities with sheer ability and knowledge even in politics. In every other walk of life it is even more conspicuously true that on knowledge and the ability to use it well and honorably are based distinction and honor and power.

Political philosophers have always been doubtful about the matter of leadership in a democracy. More than ever today when the very foundations of the social structure seem rent and torn, when half the

world is engaged in deadly strife, and when both the alarmist and the pacifist are dinning in our ears discordant cries, are beards wagged and heads shaken over the sad state of this poor republic, bereft of sane leadership and dependent on the whim of erratic demos. We have, say these gloomy philosophers both old and new, no hereditary leaders to guide our thought and action, we have no rulers divinely appointed. We have no ruling class. We have not even a leading class. We lack great families in whom is vested a tradition of leadership, whose many generations have served the state honorably and well. We are left to ourselves, and not to folk like you and me, at least passably educated and with some power of reason, but to a host of unintelligent and ignorant citizens with the power of voting but with no other asset for governing. Only our geographical isolation has preserved us thus far from destruction. So runs the burden of these modern *vates malorum*, of late a numerous crew, lamenting our lack of an aristocracy, of hereditary leaders, of trained governors.

In truth the situation is serious enough without the groans of the calamity howler. On all sides we see facing us new problems both internal and external. Our old world is making itself over very fast, and it is entirely likely that the next thirty years will not be a comfortable period for any people. In these United States the frontier period is pretty definitely closed,

despite the fact that its needs and conditions are reflected in the great body of our public institutions and laws. It is perfectly patent—though not always perceived in Washington—that the old-fashioned political thinker and his machinery both mental and moral are out of date and doomed. The man who shouts for the Old Flag—and the post-offices—is not the sort that twentieth century constituencies are most keen to return to office. In fact, I think it may be said safely, it is exactly in times of emergency both social and political that the people instinctively turn for leadership to the men who both know and know how. Knowledge plus efficiency plus character becomes vastly attractive in times of stress and strain. The leadership which a democracy will require—and will get—in such times as are ahead of us is no demagoguery or chauvinism. These have their day—and unfortunately it is sometimes a long one. But with the need there arise the men to meet it, and they will be men of that sort of practical learning who can unite the best thought of the past with a keen perception of the needs of the present. They will be men of vision—but not visionaries, scholars—but not scholastics. The man who knows and who can apply his knowledge is the sort of leader American society needs at the present, and will need vastly more in the future. We need him in business, in the professions, in politics, in industry, in our military and our civil

service. Sound learning and the ability to use it must perforce form the basis of leadership in the present temper of the world. It takes but a glance at the frightful struggle in Europe to see that the man who knows, who can use his knowledge and who can be trusted has come to the fore in the relentless sifting of war. Even so will our own problems—less dreadful, if not less pressing—demand and (I believe) secure a leadership based on the three fundamentals—learning, skill, character.

Well, supposing that all this is true, what has it to do with libraries and librarians? Granted the thesis—and you do not *all* grant it, I am sure—what place has it on the program of the A. L. A.? The topic has, perhaps, at least one vital application to our own work. We cannot well forecast the future librarian of distinction along any other lines than those I have just indicated. Who of us will venture to deny that the successful leader among librarians must combine an intimate and minute knowledge of library processes and details with an ability to put that knowledge to efficient practical use? As librarians we have a three-fold duty, to gather and conserve our material (books), to arrange it to serve the needs of our generation (classification and catalog) and to exploit it to the best interest of the community (service). No one of these divisions of our calling can be conceived apart from learning, skill and character. And it is, primar-

ily, his learning which gives distinction to a librarian's other qualities.

In fact, it is a fair question in the present state of the world's knowledge whether it is possible to conceive *any* extensive and deep learning apart from books in libraries. So closely is the actual knowledge of the present woven with the record of each science and art, that it is impossible as a rule to say, "On this side of the line lies the past with its error and its truth, and on that the reality as men see it today." In few, if any, lines of work is learning divorced from books. The physical and natural sciences, the applied sciences and technology seek in books the record of their progress. Without that record (largely in journals, to be sure) they must depend on memory and tradition for a feeble and groping advance. It is almost impossible to conceive nowadays any branch of knowledge which is not based on the recorded progress of the past, whether that past be distant or very recent. No science, no discipline, no branch of learning under our modern conditions flourishes for long aside and apart from its record in books. The laboratory and the factory demand the library as truly and persistently as does the historian's study or the philosopher's cabinet. The practical arts of life, the daily work of the world, are also—to a less extent indeed—dependent more and more in our complex social organization on recorded knowledge. Preëminence in

almost any field is more and more an ability to put book-learning to vital and practical use. To cite but one example from the hideous conflict in Europe; the change which has come over warfare because of the development of artillery. Can you conceive the makers of these dread modern engines of destruction creating them without a knowledge of mathematical ballistics, of metallurgical chemistry, of the properties of high explosives, and a host of intensely technical subjects? And where did they get this knowledge which has enabled ships to destroy other ships below the horizon line? From the record in books of each successive step in these various and manifold sciences.

If, then, leadership is conditioned by knowledge, and knowledge largely by the variety, extent, and availability of books, we may well pause to reflect a while on the competence of American libraries as regards their books. Is our democracy furnished as it should be to aid the man who aspires to leadership through his knowledge? How far are our resources adequate to the demands now actually made on them. and likely soon to be made even more insistently? I shall not inquire as to our willingness to make our material available, our efficiency in arranging it, our power and desire to advertise. But *have we the goods?* Can American science, art, philosophy, criticism, history, literature discover in any (or all) our libraries

their needed and, indeed vital, food? Here is a question we may well ask ourselves in an honest spirit of searching inquiry. How well is *your* library equipped to *serve* the real leaders of *your* community? We are not to ask ourselves whether we do a good work, a useful work, but can we do a vital work for our day? Can we supply the man who knows with the means of broadening and deepening his knowledge? Do we own the books we should?

In general, we do not. We have hosts of libraries throughout this land. We have many large libraries. We have a few huge libraries. But we do not yet have anything approaching in point of completeness the British Museum or the Bibliothèque Nationale. Dr. Richardson's survey of our actual owning of scientific journals published at the Atlanta Conference in 1899 would doubtless require great revision and restatement if made at the present day. But even granted all the magnificient progress of these seventeen years—for it has been magnificent—a survey of the same or related fields would show no startling gains over the situation in 1899. Only fair progress has been made in supplying our fundamental needs in the sciences, taking the country as a whole. We have some splendid examples of specialization—the Surgeon-General's Library, the John Crerar Library, the John Carter Brown Library, the United Engineering Societies Library in New York, the Wisconsin

Historical Society's Library, and others which will occur to you at once, particularly in highly technical fields such as law and chemistry. But not even the libraries maintained by the Federal Government have yet come within sight of the point of saturation (if I may be allowed the figure) in their respective lines. Our American scientists, technicians, historians, economists, jurists, have not at their command, even with our present development of inter-library loans, such resources as are at the disposal of their British, French, German, and Austrian colleagues. We have a splendid beginning, but it is only a beginning. We sorely need to study coöperative buying and coöperative use. We must work together and not at random or at cross-purposes if we are to put American libraries in a full state of preparedness to serve American leaders of thought and action. The very eminence achieved by the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, the Harvard University Library, the Boston Public Library, and the Yale University Library (to mention only some of our millionaires) demands of them and of the rest of us that we all work together to the end that no real scholar be let and hindered in his work by the absence from these United States of the books his work demands.

At this point I may perhaps enter a *caveat*. Let no one suppose that I for a moment ignore or underrate the service of our libraries on other than the

purely informational or scholastic side. This is not the place, nor am I, perhaps, the man, to pay just tribute to the devoted labors of those pioneers who have brought libraries into being throughout this land. We are not now discussing the value to our people of the stores of poetry, fiction, literature, and art which our libraries are supplying to an ever-widening clientele. The worth and value of recreative reading no one feels more keenly than I. Did our libraries serve no other purpose, they would still have an ample excuse for being in their function of providing good, wholesome, attractive, inspiring books for their communities. Incidentally it may be remarked that frequently the lack of such food for the soul in libraries of the learned type is one of their greatest weaknesses.

Are we competent on the side of service? In general we are. Nowhere in the world is the scholar less hampered by rule or petty regulation, less hindered by imperfect or wanting records, more helped by specially trained librarians. We have developed a professional spirit, and it is a spirit of service worthy of comparison with the best ideals of the medical or other learned professions. The note of service is insistent in all our gatherings, all our schools, all our libraries. Despite individual cases of grudging use of facilities, of poor catalogs or worse schemes of arrangement, despite all those deficiencies of buildings,

staff, equipment which we know too well, it remains true that the American librarian has developed technical efficiency to a high degree, has shown a public spirit and a zeal in his work which have won hearty recognition from the community. I need not fear an accusation of self-praise when I affirm that on the side of service we are prepared to render real and vital aid to research and to learning. More than that, we are seeking to find out the actual needs of our communities and constituencies, to bring the library home to them, to render not only a willing and competent, but an intelligent and sympathetic service.

But such generalizations as these seldom carry conviction. They represent at best an opinion, and give but small measure of the grounds on which judgment has been reached, Consider, however, the actual facts revealed by a few experiences. Certain members of a committee appointed to survey the needs of the scientific and practical work of the Department of Agriculture declared to me a few months since that,—notwithstanding the existence of the spendid library facilities of Washington,—not the least of which is the Library of that Department,—notwithstanding all that well-known bibliographic work which has been so well done in the various bureaus of the Department,—the botanist, the zoölogist, the expert in farm management and the agricultural chemist were manifestly and painfully worse off in the way of

vitally necessary books than were their colleagues in England, France and Germany. The United States government, said these gentlemen, should spend a hundred thousand dollars a year for five years to give the scientists in applied botany and zoölogy the books they absolutely require in order to do satisfactory work for the American people. No one who knows the government service will accuse these men and others like them of being visionaries and dreamers. The man who was most emphatic in voicing the demand for more, and yet more, books has successfully introduced into America the cultivation of the date palm in the desert country of our Southwest, has brought the high-priced Egyptian cotton to successful commercial growth on the irrigated lands of Arizona with a yield which a few years since was five bales and last year was over a million, and has brought under contribution for the benefit of this country the native and cultivated fruits of regions as far asunder as China and the Sahara desert. When such men tell me they can't do their work well because we do not have in this country—or librarians can not find for them—the books they want, I feel it is up to us to take notice.

Most of you are familiar with the efforts made some years since by a committee of the American Historical Association to locate in our libraries copies of the fundamental collections of sources of European his-

tory. Now it is probably true that the prosperity of the country and the quality of its leadership can hardly be shown to be dependent on at least a sufficient supply of these monumental works. But how shall we divorce institutions, politics, government from their origins and from the long story of their growth? Without these sources, how shall we train historians or aid them to develop? Are we not heirs of European life and culture? In this complex of nationalities which we call the United States can we afford to be without the record of any and all European nationalities? No one library—save perhaps Harvard—if my memory does not fail me—was shown to have even a working majority of the sources of European history when this inquiry was begun. Surely the resultant purchases alone have justified Dr. Richardson's undertaking.

Last winter at the Bibliographical Society's meeting at Chicago a young American scholar read a most illuminating—almost an epoch-making—paper on the sources of Slavic bibliography. One by one he unfolded for us the checkered and painful record of bibliographic labor in Russia, Poland, Croatia, Bohemia, and so on. At the conclusion of the paper I turned to the librarian of one of our large universities with the query: "How many of those titles do you suppose you have in your library?" "Perhaps five per cent," was the answer. At Michigan we proved

not to have even that many, although our collection of bibliographies is by no means to be despised; in fact, we have been rather proud of it. Comment is unnecessary, when one considers that in Michigan we have at least two hundred and fifty thousand people of Slavic origin.

Take the case of the chemical industries as another example. If there is any one branch of science pretty well covered by American libraries, chemical technology is probably that one. And yet an expert in but one branch of metallurgical chemistry, a scientist who was also an expert bibliographer, had to work in half a dozen different cities, resorting continually to interlibrary loans, before he could secure for abstracting the greater portion of his references on *vanadium* alone. Even then he had in reserve enough references to justify a trip to Europe at the expense of his employers. The great chemical industries of Detroit are writing to us almost weekly inquiring about journals of which we can get no track in our card and other bibliographies. The very fact that we can get them so much very properly renders them irritable when we have to tell them we don't know where a set can be found.

I might go on—and any other librarian here might do the same—showing field after field in which the existing and recorded literature of value is not well covered in our American libraries. In the very nature

of things it can not be otherwise at present. We are after all a very young people. Our libraries are not old—as men count age in Asia and Europe. What I have just said but lends emphasis and point to those oft repeated injunctions of previous conferences. We must coöperate in service to bring out the full power of what we have. We must coöperate in buying to make our money count for the most. We must help each other by every bibliographic device we can invent. We must organize for mutual service of our communities. If leadership through learning means anything, on us in large measure rests the burden of providing the means of learning. If the man who knows needs to increase his knowledge—as he always will—we must not fail him. We must have the books for him. How we shall bring him and the books together is another story.

CHANGING IDEALS IN LIBRARIANSHIP[1,2]

Every once in a while we hear some one—usually a very youthful person—making slighting remarks to the disparagement of the "old-fashioned librarian." This phrase is generally coupled with some ungracious allusion to his supposed function as a "keeper" of books. It is not uncommonly, also, the introduction to certain highly laudatory reflections on the extent to which "*nous avons changé tout cela.*" I often wonder whether these folk who so glibly relegate the old-fashioned librarian to the limbo of out-worn ideals ever stop to think what their own chances for employment in modern libraries would be today, had it not been for the devoted labors of these same "old-fashioned" folk who literally made possible modern library development. These "old-fashioned" librarians included such men as Ainsworth Rand Spofford, Justin Winsor, Josephus Nelson Larned, William Frederick Poole, Charles Ammi Cutter, Charles C. Jewett, J. G. Cogswell, Anthony Panizzi, Richard Garnett, Henry Bradshaw, and a score of others I might mention. Happy indeed the genera-

[1] Read before the New York Library Association at Lake Placid, September 24, 1918.

[2] *Library Journal*, January, 1919.

tion which can claim such leaders! Well may we honor them today! They set a standard which won the reverence and respect of the world of letters. They made the name of librarian honored and revered in places where his position had been held somewhat above a mere clerkship, somewhat lower than a schoolmaster's post. As "modern" librarians, with our faces set toward the possibilities of what we conceive to be a true service to society, we may well pause to pay tribute to their memory, and to inquire a moment as to their distinguishing traits.

What strikes one first in studying the lives of these men of the generation which passed off the stage of library work about 1900 (or a little earlier) is that they were one and all collectors of rare skill. They all seem to have had an instinctive sense of book values, an eye for treasures, a scent for the permanently useful work. The libraries which they headed were in most cases actually brought together, built up, strengthened, by their own labors. How many, many times have I had occasion at the Library of Congress to echo my chief's sentiment—"It's ill gleaning after Dr. Spofford!" How often did I find that his keen instinct had brought to the Library of Congress exactly those books for which scholars sought decades later. The Astor, the Lenox, the Boston Athenæum, the Boston Public Library, the Library of Congress, the Buffalo Library, the Brook-

lyn Library were, in the old days, *real* libraries—not buildings almost empty of books, with high sounding dedicatory inscriptions and the names of great authors across their fronts—and few of their works inside—but collections of strong and-valuable books. The present eminence of two of those I have named, the consolidated New York Public Library, and the Library of Congress, is due not to their palatial buildings, not to their magnificently organized staffs —great as these are—but to the foundation of books of worth laid by their old-fashioned librarians through fifty years. "The successful librarian," according to a somewhat apocryphal saying attributed to Dr. Poole. "must be a good buyer, a good beggar,—and (occasionally) a good thief." To what an extent certain of his compeers followed out all three of these requirements more than one of our libraries bear witness.

Moreover these men of the later nineteenth century —for we move so fast that even these seem remote from our day—were generally good conservators. They took good care of good things. They understood the difference between an original New England Primer, or Poor Richard's Almanac, or Shakespeare quarto, and the modern reprint or text-edition. Sometimes they took too good care of their treasures for the convenience of the man in haste or the busy reporter. But I observe that their libraries still own

these same treasures, and are holding on to them with a firmness which is in no way different from that of old. Perhaps they made all books a little hard to get at in their zeal to save their valuable ones. For this, however, the structural materials available in their day, the types of buildings, and the physical limitations and dangers imposed by mill construction, wooden cases, non-fireproof rooms, and old-fashioned safes were fully as much to blame as the spirit of the librarian. Few people in library work realize the part which the electric light, structural and sheet steel, electric elevators, heavy plate glass, and the like have played in revolutionizing library methods. Much of our modern theory and practice is due to the engineer and inventor rather than to the librarian. In fact many of the things which we do daily and hourly our predecessors could not do for lack of the means—telephone, for instance.

The old-fashioned librarian of any distinction was preëminently scholarly in his tastes and habits. His equipment was usually such as to win the respect of the best minds in his community. He could not conceive what I sometimes hear called the "library business." His attitude was distinctly that of the man of learning and attainments. Need I call the roll again to prove that the leaders in the past generation were men not of scholarship merely, but of productive scholarship as well? Even those who confined them-

selves more particularly to librarianship were producers—witness Mr. Larned's series of books, Dr. Poole's Index, Dr. Spofford's invaluable Almanacs, C. A. Cutter's Expansive Classification,—not to mention others. We may well search our own generation for their equals. One of our greatest perils is the exaltation of executive ability over scholarly attainment. One of our greatest needs is the development of scholarly executives, men who while able to direct great libraries in the modern spirit of service of the community, are yet in sympathetic touch with the world of letters and with productive research. Shorn of such sympathies and abilities, our librarianship will surely degenerate into the common mold of "big business." And what American libraries may become if bereft of the tinge of humane letters, we may well shudder to consider. On you who are younger in the practice of our calling falls the duty and the high opportunity of combining the scholarly ideals of our former leaders with the energizing zeal and skill of the modern director of corporate activities.

But I have not yet exhausted the list of enviable characteristics of our old-fashioned librarians of distinction. Most of them showed two other traits in a marked degree—unselfish devotion to their work, and high professional pride in their calling. I could fill the remainder of this hour with anecdotes showing both these traits. But let me at least pause long

enough to read you the beautiful lines which Herbert Putnam wrote on the death of Ainsworth Rand Spofford in 1908:

A. R. S.
1825–1908
The Epilogue
He Toiled long, well, and with Good Cheer
In the Service of Others
Giving his Whole, Asking little
Enduring patiently, Complaining
Not at all
With small Means
Effecting Much
He had no Strength that was not Useful
No Weakness that was not Lovable
No Aim that was not Worthy
No Motive that was not Pure

Ever he Bent
His Eye upon the Task
Undone
Ever he Bent
His Soul upon the Stars
His Heart upon
The Sun

Bravely he Met
His Test
Richly he Earned
His Rest

What nobler tribute has any librarian had—or deserved?

It is, of course, true that professional success in any

line of work is never reached without devotion and wholesome pride. But when I recall the public spirit which inaugurated and carried through the various coöperative efforts of American librarians, the unselfish and lasting love for the work which inspired men of high attainment to long and tedious labor without hope of personal reward, when I remember the willingness to aid other librarians, the spirit of mutual helpfulness which has been so long a dominant note in our profession, I congratulate you, and with you the ranks of American librarians, on your entrance upon such an heritage. More than the collector's skill, or the custodian's zeal, more than scholarship or learning, more than public esteem or high honor, is that spirit of high consecration to our calling and of willingness to serve one another gladly which form its best traditions. It was well and truly said of old: "Other men have labored, and ye are entered into their labors."

But highly as we may well think of our leaders of an earlier generation, greatly as we should and do esteem their ideals and their traditions of professional attainment, it remains true that their labors and their aims were directed as a rule to but one portion of the community. They served the world of letters and the men and women of literary tastes and interests. The scholar, the research worker, the man of cultivated tastes, the student (young or old), the bookish folk in

the community—these were their clientèle, and to the the interests of such classes they devoted the work of their libraries. Libraries were for them—and for their day—primarily the concern of learning and its devotees, of books as vehicles of instruction and of recreation. None dreamed that a few years would see almost a revolution in the conception of the possible users of books, and of the library's duty toward the community as a whole.

For we *have* "changed all that." The library—whether we like it or not—(and with some of us it goes a bit hard!) has become socialized in its aims and in its practice. Its directors have gone out into the highways and by-ways and *compelled* folk to come in. The work of the New York Public Library today would seem to James Lenox a far cry from the uses he expected would be made of his endowments—but I believe he would rejoice greatly in it, could he see it in the full sweep of its noble service to the great city he loved so well. Without going into it historically, without stopping to trace the steps by which the old-fashioned library of 1850 has become the modern public library, we may, perhaps, profit by a brief survey of the present library situation.

First and foremost we note the great increase in public libraries, an increase both in their number and in their size. Whereas in 1850 there were but few public libraries, in the modern sense, to be found in our

country, now no considerable city is without one. More significant still is the great size of certain of our libraries. There are well over one hundred libraries having over two hundred thousand volumes each, and we have a growing group of the million class including the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library with over two million each, Harvard and the Boston Public Library with a million and a half each, Brooklyn and Yale in the millionaire class, and doubtless others which have attained that rank faster than the figures can be compiled and published.

Along with this growth in great libraries has gone an even more significant spreading of the public library over the entire country. There are in the aggregate vastly more books in small libraries in the United States than in the big ones. The one distinctly American feature in the library "movement" is the small town or city library. Nowhere else is there anything quite similar to it. Big libraries are pretty much alike the world over. But our small American libraries are a class apart, and a very large class, too.

In fact I have often found that European librarians had no conception of the function in our communities of the smaller public libraries. Collections of ten, twenty, thirty, fifty thousand volumes in small cities and large towns, tax-supported, reaching many sides of the town life, contributing to the working efficiency

of democratic communities, are as hard for, say, our French colleagues to understand, as are their more purely museum or research libraries strange to many American librarians, accustomed to a more popular service. It is just this element in our American library gatherings, eager, helpful, full of plans for improvement, for uplift, for reaching folk with books and papers, which chiefly distinguishes American library meetings and programs from those abroad. The service of the people—all the people—of the town and county with books through the medium of the public library, is the goal—more or less well attained—of our town libraries. This effort knows little—perhaps too little—of the scholar's labors. Its speeches and papers do not smell offensively of the lamp, as Aeschines said of Demosthenes' orations. But they do bear witness to a spirit of service which is the best trait of the smaller American libraries. When all is said and done these libraries form our distinctively American type; they are wholesome, clean, useful, inspiring. They are *our* contribution to popular education, following in the wake of the public school, and, like the school, capable of immense improvement—and of a mighty social service. We should rejoice in them—even with all their limitations —for faulty service is more eloquent of future good than no service at all. Whatever may be said by pessimists in the profession or out of it, to the dis-

repute of our small American libraries, they are at least very much alive.

Paralleling this spread of the small library over the country has been the growth of the branch library idea in cities. I remember well visiting a branch library for the first time in Cleveland in 1896. Had I been a prophet, or the son of a prophet, I might have foretold how branch libraries would dot the maps of our large cities, while delivery stations and the like would surpass any and all predictions of library development. Not the large cities only, but the small towns now have branches. Even my own modest university town boasts not alone a public library—but two "branches" as well. Every effort is now being made with a well defined purpose to bring books home to people, to afford convenient service, to give (as *Life* might say) no man, woman or child a chance to escape the book.

With this physical development—and that has cost millions on millions of the taxpayers' money, helped out by Mr. Carnegie, to be sure—with this physical development of libraries has come a conscious effort at exploitation. This effort on its best side is magnificent in its possibilities for increased and increasing usefulness. The modern idea is to seek out every avenue of service, to do all the work that books can do when directed and interpreted by sympathetic and intelligent librarians. It is this conscious effort

to bring good books to play in the service of mankind which has given us many of our modern forms of library work, such as all our work with children, with the schools, with clubs of various sorts, highly organized reference work, extension work, traveling libraries, and so on almost without end. In short we librarians are convinced that all printed matter is our province—not necessarily literature alone in the old sense—and that it is our business to get things in print into the hands of every one who can profitably use them—whether he knows it or not.

It is this intense conviction which lies back of the present agitation for publicity and advertising for libraries. It is a wholly natural and legitimate conviction. Books and printed things *are* worth while, and should be known to thousands who suffer from lack of the help they can have for the asking. But, remembering whence we sprang, and whose heritors we are, let me urge you by all you treasure *not* to advertise until you are sure of your wares. Be sure—to use modern slang—you "have the goods" before you push them into the light of "pitiless publicity." It is perhaps not wholly without significance that some of the most ardent advocates of advertising for libraries come from libraries notoriously ill-equipped for service.

Another phase of this conviction of the universal value of printed things is the growth of the so-called

"special" libraries. Business men have found that they have hourly need for information found only in print. Professional men, engineers, doctors, lawyers, insurance men, bankers, manufacturers, are now gathering their own libraries, organizing them on the most modern lines, stealing some of our best people, even as the "movies" have stolen the best actresses from the "legitimate" drama. This movement—which has always existed—is only in its infancy. We are going to see print (not necessarily books) in the service of business and the professions to an undreamed-of degree. We see it even now in the service of legislation as no one even fifteen years ago supposed possible. And all this development means more—and better—librarians.

Contemporaneously there has come a standardization of library technique. If you learn how to do any library process in one place, you can generally do it successfully in any other. This was not true even twenty years ago. How well I remember the common (and true) remark about library school graduates in the days when they were few. "You have to teach them first to unlearn most of the things they have learned in the library school." That day is past, although our library schools have yet much to learn about both teaching and librarianship. There has come about a great amount of centralization of library work. The Library of Congress and the

American Library Association are now doing all sorts of things for all the libraries which twenty years ago each one did—more or less well—for itself. We are gradually, but surely, developing a body of library doctrine which can be taught, and which all novices will be required to learn. To this result, moreover, the library schools have contributed in no small degree.

To sum up our survey: This is a day of thoughtful planning of library work, a day when we are trying to use all our plant all the time, or at least to make it all count all the time. It is a day when the use of slight, of even purely ephemeral, material— clippings, pamphlets, leaflets, broadsides, pictures—is being organized and made a part of regular library work as truly as ever were solid folios and stout quartos. It is a day of big libraries in every city, and big libraries largely made up of little libraries of duplicates. It is a day when the countryside has its books—or soon will have them—as well as the town and the city. Every school, every club, every church, and almost every factory and shop will soon have its small, special collection, the larger ones with trained librarians in charge. The book-using art is bound to grow, and our failure or success in leading and directing its growth is going to be the measure of our ability to rise to our opportunity.

Now all this enormous growth has not come about without some grave consequences. In fact it is not

too much to say that we stand at a crisis in library affairs. There is on us a very real conflict between quality and quantity, between loyalty to our professional ideals, what we know to be good service, and the pressure of an ever-increasing demand. Never have we seen so many things to be done, or felt so keenly our own call to serve. There is a disquieting dispositon to spread our energies over too great a number of things, to take on too much work, and to advertise far beyond our ability to perform. It is a very insidious temptation, and I believe it assails the heads of small libraries even more subtly than their colleagues with greater and heavier demands and resources.

In fact, if I were disposed to play the rôle of an unfriendly critic—which I am not—I think I should have to say that as a profession we have not successfully resisted this temptation, this pressure to expand beyond our powers of faithful and efficient performance. In one sense mediocrity may be said to be the key to the library situation in America at the present day. We have few really strong libraries, few very fine collections, few wonderfully expert librarians. We have numbers—large numbers—of fair buildings, fairly good collections, moderately successful librarians and assistants. This state of affairs is balanced to a great extent by our spirit of service, by our standardized technique, by our very effort to keep

abreast of the best thought in the profession. But the ugly facts remain that the demand for extension in the way of branches has seriously handicapped the development of strong, well-equipped central libraries; the need for all sorts of new work has drawn off too many able people from the regular lines of service; the supply of trained librarians is by no means equal to the demand. There is a woeful tendency to imitate in service, and, worst of all, there is a great dearth of good books in very many of these new lines of publication. The trash which is being published today on various phases of business, and which is going on to our library shelves, is but one illustration of that tendency to mediocrity—and worse—of which I am regretfully speaking. There is no doubt about the fact—quantity lords it over quality in too many phases of our work today.

May I, then, in view of all I have just said, venture on some seasonable advice to my younger colleagues? Before everything let no man deceive you by saying that this is a day of great movements, of blind forces beyond the individual's power to control. It is not so. No man can escape his age. But in no age or time has personality counted as it does now. We come back to the man, to the woman, every time. Here in all this welter of the modern complex is your chance, your own chance, to make yourself count.

One of your greatest assets will be an ability to say

"No"—and to say it very loud and clear. The peculiar temptation of women librarians seems to be to take on more than they can carry out. As Kipling once said, they are "over-engined for their beam." Poise in library work—as in all other work—comes from a serene self-knowledge, and that includes a knowledge of one's limitations as well as of one's possibilities.

You will not succeed unless you do some one thing supremely well. It is perhaps too early to say what that may be. But remember, the future in library work is one of specialization within the profession. When you find a line which you follow with ease, with pleasure, with eagerness, stick to following it. So will you find and do your best work. And finally, I beg you, do not enter on your work with any small view of the possibilities of our calling. This is a day when the nation's call to service rings in our ears. Library work *is* service. It cannot be anything else. In it are no great rewards of money or fame. But there are great things to be done. The work calls for devotion, for learning, for character, for service.

One service especially has been now laid on us with an ever-growing heaviness. We have—perhaps lightly—assumed the burden of supplying the reading of our soldiers and sailors, at home in training, abroad on service or in hospital. The librarians of the country through the American Library Association in the

summer of 1917 volunteered to conduct special library work for the new armies soon to assemble. We went to the American people in the fall and asked them for money. They gave it, generously, freely. Amid a thousand perplexities such as beset any new effort on a huge scale our War Service Committee organized our forces, brought thousands, yes, millions, of books and of dollars to effective use in camps, in hospitals, on our ships. The Library War Service of the American Library Association stands today a living, active, moving proof of the vitality and power of American library ideals.

But proud as we are of what has been done there yet looms large before us a greater task. We need the best effort of every librarian, of each library trustee. What we have done has not been accomplished easily. There has been much hard work, much sacrifice—both of ease and of cherished conviction and opinion. The work ahead of us calls for more, and yet more people. It calls for you!

I said the admirable work we have done had not been accomplished easily. There have been earnest and sincere differences of opinion. There at first were delays—heart-breaking delays—and difficulties. Decisions have had to be made—with the military ends of the army and navy always in view—which have not pleased some very earnest and very loyal folk among us. There will be more differences, and

more difficulties. But what do these things matter? It is the work, our work, the best work librarians ever did, which counts. To it I beg you all to rally with but one purpose, one aim, one resolve. Support the War Service! Get behind it! Work for it! Make it better! Let every camp and hospital librarian, every volunteer at dispatch offices, on the transports, at Headquarters, in France, feel your interest, your determination. *We are not going to fail our men!* They need books and our best brains. If librarianship has any force, any ideals, if it means anything, then we must forget all our differences, and go forward together.

OUR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES—A SURVEY AND A PROGRAM[1,2]

This is a day of stock-taking. Ancient institutions, established forms of government, the whole order of society find themselves compelled to justify not their methods but their very existence. The world-cataclysm of 1914 to 1918 has had enormous destructive powers. The job of beating Germany and her allies has shaken the whole race (at least in the Occident) out of century-old ruts. We have had to bestir ourselves—the whole Western World has had to bestir itself—to unaccustomed tasks, and now that we have at last won a military triumph, no one is quite content to settle back into the old routine. The discontented and angered folk who have been grievously unhappy for decades—and often with too much reason—are rushing forth with mighty shoutings and much spilling of ink in this country—and much spilling of the blood of wretched humanity in eastern Europe. We are conscious that everything we have been accustomed to do, and much that we have been accustomed to think,

[1] An address before the Ohio College Association, April, 1919.

[2] *School and Society*, vol. XII, no. 299, pp. 205–214, September 18, 1920.

is practically on trial. "Schools and the means of education," said the old Ordinance of 1787, establishing civil government in that Northwest Territory in which we live, "Schools and the means of education, shall forever be encouraged." One hundred and thirty-three years later we find ourselves forced to drop our complacency, and to justify not the encouragement merely—but even the existence, of the "means of education." My particular concern is with one of these—our libraries. Of what sort are our college and university libraries, how ought they to function, do they do it, are they worth while?

I take it that there are just three uses of libraries in the academic scheme of things—too frequently a "sorry scheme of things," if one may believe the talk at gatherings of professors and students. The college library exists as an instrument of instruction, as an instrument of research, and as one of the means of attaining what (for want of a better word) we call culture. Incidentally it furnishes a livelihood, more or less precarious, for a certain number of folk, but we librarians may not justify its continuance and support on that score, any more than on the Ordinance of 1787. If one may find other reasons than these three—instruction, research, culture—for the college library, they would undoubtedly be in the direction

of preserving for future generations the record of the cultural condition of our day, a task which would be fully as well performed by libraries of another sort. It is, then in their threefold aspect, their relations to teaching, to investigation, and to the development of a rounded, informed, and sensitive mind, that I wish to survey our college libraries before setting out what I conceive to be their more immediate needs.

I take it that to this audience I need not insist that the college or university includes the faculties as well as the students. Provision for the needs of both is necessarily demanded of the academic type of library. To the layman the needs of the student—particularly in the field of instruction—are far more apparent than are the no less vital requirements of his instructors; requirements vital because by study alone may be kept alive that spirit of scholarship without which no college rises far above the level of the city trade-school or the old-fashioned young-ladies seminary.

One may assume, as a reasonable postulate in instruction, that a fair supply of modern books is necessary to training the average undergraduate. Further, that certain minimum facilities in the way of buildings and rooms are needed for libraries. And finally, that there are really no libraries without some people to serve them. How nearly are our

libraries competent in these three matters, the barest fundamentals of libraries as vehicles of instruction?

Take first the field of literature—pure literature or belles-lettres. It is a sorry college which does not give instruction in the English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Latin and Greek languages. Now the whole modern trend is to attempt to minimize instruction in the mechanics of language in favor of instruction in literature. But real instruction in literature is impossible without books, books which the student may and must *read* for himself. Talking and reading *about* books will never prove a satisfactory method save for cramming for examinations. That means that no very thorough or competent work in English literature can be given except on the basis of a well-rounded collection of English, American, Canadian and Australian books in the fields of poetry, drama, fiction, essays, and so on. Of course Gothic can be taught with half a dozen books—there are practically no monuments of the Gothic tongue beside the Bible of Ulfilas. Anglo-Saxon may be studied with only fifty or a hundred volumes. But from the time of Chaucer to the present day—from Middle English to the course on the short story (to put it in terms of the curriculum) —the range in the English tongue alone demands at least four or five thousand volumes as a minimum—Heaven knows where the outer limits might be!

Then there is a French literature with its wealth of classic and modern writers. The average Michigan or Ohio college gives instruction in French, a few courses in classic drama, in modern prose writers, and the like, but I venture to say that there is hardly a single comprehensive and strong collection of French literature in the two states—certainly our collection at Michigan (though large) is faulty and defective. We can give little sample courses in parts of French literature—but our libraries will not furnish to students or faculties that survey of the output of the French literary spirit which alone will allow them to grasp its proportions and its real significance in the history of human thought. Even complete sets of the masters are often wanting in our smaller colleges. A library which has less than a couple of thousand volumes in its French collections is ridiculously inadequate for undergraduate instruction in French literature.

And now shall I call the roll of the other tongues: German from the Minnesingers to Luther and to Heine; Italian from Petrarch to d'Annunzio; Spanish from the Chronicle of the Cid to Ibañez; Portuguese, Dutch, Norse, Swedish, Danish? And the authors of the ancient world, Greek and Latin, in particular —are we not their direct heirs? Of course we can, and do, *teach* Greek and Latin and German and Spanish and even those Slavic tongues whose litera-

tures I have not ventured to mention. But we do but poorly for our undergraduates when we give them a text-book and a dictionary and require them merely to translate as an exercise in mental gymnastics with supposedly incidental benefit to their English style. If they get by actual contact no notion of the place of their text in its national literature, then our libraries are but shams as means of instruction in literature.

And in the field of letters I have failed to mention vast areas with which a competent student, even as an undergraduate, should have at least, as Emerson said of Arabic, a bowing acquaintance. There is the whole Oriental world—Chinese, Japanese, the Semitic literatures, generally undreamed of by our so-called "literary" student. Of course no one is for an instant saying that the average college should have a good collection of Japanese or Arabic books. But it should have enough of these (and their compeers) in both the originals and in English versions to inform, let us say, the intending missionary that the "heathen" are at least not without letters.

Before leaving this inviting subject of the things the average undergraduate doesn't encounter—he is, after all, a friendly and fine youth, our substitute for "the child" of the pedagogue's familiar discourse —may I at least mention the character of the books on religion in the ordinary college or university

library? Can we not have some way of relegating to upper shelves—if not to outer darkness—the leavings from the libraries of deceased ministers? We all know how far they are removed from the present day. There is no dearth of good and fine books on religious topics, but the college library seldom owns them, or, if it does, they are submerged in the flood of ancient commentaries and treatises on topics once timely and absorbing, now uninteresting save to the theological historian. The great classics of religious literature seldom stand out of the ruck, as they should, and the student "passes up" the whole lot—more's the pity, for he inevitably gets the idea that books on religion are all dead.

Well, we don't seem wholly competent in the field of instruction in the literature of the world. How about history, particularly modern history? The whole American public has recently learned intimately of peoples and places hitherto known to but a few professors, and demands instruction in history and geography for its sons and daughters. Of course we can furnish text-books again, and a few larger treatises. But professors insist that they can't teach history by the text-book method alone, and we librarians agree with them. And the difficulties in the way of securing an adequate supply of documents, texts, treatises and printed source-material for the undergraduate study of American

history alone are formidable even for the university library. How much more for the enormous field of European history? Yet European and American history do not comprise world-history. Here are Asia and Africa and South America demanding their place at the peace-conference and in the League of Nations. Can you teach American history with a text-book, the Old-South leaflets, Hart's *American History Told by Contemporaries*, MacDonald's *Select-Characters*, and the *War Encyclopaedia of the Committee on Public Information?* Well, a good many people are doing it on about that equipment, perhaps with a file of the *Congressional Globe* and a few public documents thrown in. Of course it isn't done in Ohio or Michigan colleges! Can one teach medieval history successfully to undergraduates without—well, I'll not attempt a list. Nobody ever did teach medieval history without falling back more or less on the lecture method, and praying that his students got some notions of the feudal system and the glories of city life in the thirteenth century from those slim aids he was able to place before them in an English dress.

I shall not dare to say what *is* a competent equipment in history for undergraduate instruction in a college library. But one thing I am sure of; nobody has yet complained of a surfeit of material.

And with history there are associated economics

and sociology and anthropology and philosophy. Of course we are getting into deep waters here. There is always the fight between the idea of lecture plus text-book, and the notion of a first-hand study of documents and evidence in print. Many of the men who lecture or quiz on a text do so just because the other method is not possible without a competent equipment in the college library. It is perfectly safe to say that once the introductory courses are passed, instruction in economics, in sociology, in any of the sciences of human relations, demands many, many books. It demands documents of the governments, statistics, maps, all the output of the busy offices investigating and reporting on all manner of people and things. Even our great university libraries are mostly inadequate to supplying the needs of this sort of instruction. Take international law, for example—long a subject of instruction for seniors at Michigan since the days of President Angell's famous lectures. The literature of the subject is amazing in its extent and range—even a selection would strain the purse of the average college. But the boys are all debating topics of international law, mainly on the basis of the *Literary Digest*, and the pamphlets of the Association for International Conciliation. Surely our college libraries are only barely competent in this subject, and this is typical of the whole group.

So far I have said not a word about natural and applied science. We have finally learned to teach these subjects in laboratories, but we have as yet but faintly sensed the fact that the *record* of the progress of science as set forth in journals and the great treatises is an essential part of the subject-matter of instruction. We make our students learn the technique of the microscope or the photometer, but seldom do we require them to learn the technique of the catalogs of the Royal Society or the Index Medicus. Here again it is the fault—in part—of the library equipment which has directed the method of of teaching. Laboratories and note-books are not enough for undergraduate, still less graduate, teaching in science. The student needs to be familiar with at least the great journals and the great reference books, if he is to get the true benefit of scientific study. Not skill alone in observation and its recording, but an ability to run down quickly what has been published on similar observation, marks the young scientist of real ability and of severe training. And without an adequate library the otherwise brilliant student in natural science generally lacks that historic sense which so distinguishes the master from the neophyte, and whose absence so generally marks (and mars) our American scientists of the present day. You may call the roll of the sciences from astronomy to zoology—no one of them

gives proper undergraduate instruction by the laboratory alone.

Please note that I am ignoring absolutely the whole field of the applied sciences and technology, of the domestic and industrial arts, subjects which have forced their way into college curricula, and on which there exists an enormous body of books—books which go out of date almost faster than they are printed. And the great field of the fine arts I am likewise deliberately omitting. Properly to equip a department of the fine arts in such a fashion that even elementary courses of instruction in art history and criticism can be pursued successfully, requires an expenditure of money far in excess of the ordinary resources of our American colleges. Not only are the necessary books legion in number—their cost is so great that but few libraries without special endowments may attempt to enter on their systematic purchase.

If then the ordinary equipment in books suffices only for the barest needs of undergraduate instruction, what shall we say of college library buildings from the point of view of teaching? Well, the less said the better. There are only some half dozen college library buildings in the country which appear to have been consciously planned with a view to their use in instruction. As a rule, every sort of need must be met in a single general reading room, usually

noisy and serving together faculty and students both advanced and elementary. There are frequently small collections scattered in laboratories and classrooms about the campus, designed, as a rule, for the convenience of professors and advanced students. But buildings deliberately planned for facilitating undergraduate study are conspicuous by their absence. In fact the pretty little library buildings which are the pride of many colleges are veritable frauds when considered from any scientific or professional point of view. They are vague architecturally, just because our college libraries are vague. They show no differentiation of functions, just because the college library has not been grasped as a teaching instrument. Most of them might just as well have been planned for public libraries, save for some few special rooms for research.

If my contentions are sound, we must confess that the college with less than a hundred thousand volumes is but ill prepared to give modern work in the humanities and in science. The college with no special library building is probably better able to adapt its library to purposes of instruction than one possessing a modest little architectural gem, the gift of some grateful alumnus. And what of the library service, which, far more than bricks and mortar, makes a library?

The most conspicuous feature of our college library

service in the past twenty-five years has been its devoted sacrifice. Librarians have been making bricks without straw, have been trying to make one book do the work of five, have been all things to all men, but with the usual result of satisfying no one—themselves included. I can not name a college or university library in the United States today which is adequately manned to render such effective service as our hospitals and even our laboratories give. American librarians have developed a technique which works fairly well and which is admittedly superior to that in vogue in Europe, but it takes more money to apply it than most colleges have felt themselves able to afford. Most conspicuously have the librarians of colleges been obliged to lag behind their colleagues in public library work, chiefly because of lack of funds. In twenty-five years of library work I have never seen the time when I had enough force of a high grade to do well *all* the work which lay at hand, and I have served in libraries of no less standing than Princeton, the Library of Congress and the University of Michigan. If you would develop the library into an efficient aid in teaching, you must give it the means of functioning at a high level of efficiency. That means a trained staff furnished with proper tools, and large enough to carry the full work of their individual offices.

For purposes of instruction, then, if there is to be

proper instruction worthy of the twentieth century in a free democracy, the college library should have books in large measure—say a hundred or a hundred and fifty thousand books to each thousand students. There should be provision for separate reading and study rooms for certain undergraduate classes, and not only should there be an adequate staff for general library purposes, but in addition a special library staff (or detail) to aid in undergraduate study. This is a very modest program, hardly up to the level of our professed needs, but to reach it would cause most of our college libraries to double their number of volumes, to say nothing of their library budgets for maintenance.

So much for instruction. What about research? How many of you men who are sincerely trying to advance the boundaries of knowledge in your chosen field find the library resources of your own college or university adequate to your needs? How many of you can conscientiously keep a promising student under your care rather than send him off to New York, Boston, Chicago, or to Europe? I venture to say, as a result of years of trying to bring men and books together, that, outside of four or five great centers, there are not half a dozen American libraries competent for research, save in some very limited fields. A scholar in Great Britain or France, for example, whatever the defects of his home library,

can get to London or Paris quickly and from London to Paris in eight hours. Between the British Museum and the Bibliothèque Nationale he has a fair show of finding all he wants in the way of printed books. But what chance has his colleague in Columbus, or Cincinnati or Cleveland or Ann Arbor? Chicago is the nearest library center—and it is by no means comparable with either London or Paris.

Now without the opportunity for research at home, you know full well the temptations that beset the scholar. How quickly the pressure of teaching, of executive and committee duties, the necessity for providing for a growing family in a day of high prices, force the man who might have advanced knowledge and made illustrious the college in which he resides to abandon little by little those high aims and purposes with which he began his college teaching. The most vital need of American scholarship to-day as I see it, is *not* the so-called endowment of research, but the provisions of the materials for research in college and university libraries. Given the books, the scholar will infallibly use them to the lasting benefit of his kind.

In fact, I question seriously whether there will long be such a thing as American scholarship without a rapid and far-reaching increase of our means of research. Our really advanced and thorough going scholarship has been largely "made in Germany," or at least made in Europe.

Of what avail is it to bring to this central region a young man trained in the study of the history of science, for example? He will find no long series of academic transactions and proceedings, no masses of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth century treatises on his topic, no array of the minor learned societies in which appear those precious biographical notices of the less conspicuous savants. Indeed it is even doubtful whether that universal resource of the man stalled in pursuit of a date or an anecdote, our old friend *Notes and Queries* is waiting on the library shelves. He must borrow and beg hither and yon, and by the time he gets his monograph half done some Dane or Dutchman anticipates him by the publication of a treatise containing all those citations he has sought for in vain by correspondence across the continent. No wonder he retires in disgust from his own field and becomes an efficient extension lecturer or a noted "dean of men." Until we make our libraries instruments of research we shall have to depend on European study and sabbatical years for the fulfillment of the dreams of those who are obedient to the heavenly vision of exact science.

A further query is permissible as to the competence for research of our library buildings, supposing the resources in the way of books to be good. How far have university libraries—for the question chiefly

concerns them—been planned as workshops? We should distinguish sharply between facilities for training students in the *methods* of research, such as are afforded by seminar rooms and the like, and provision for independent investigation on the part either of professors or advanced students. Most modern library buildings have the former, more or less well worked out. But few of them have been designed with a view to giving convenient and quiet places for individual study in the immediate vicinity of the books—places where books may be reserved, manuscripts locked up, and where an investigator may work continuously or intermittently as his needs permit. We expect any investigator in the natural sciences to have his laboratory, often a private laboratory. But too few of our libraries—which are, of course, the laboratories for men working in all the fields of letters and arts—too few of our libraries, I say, are planned with proper provision for isolation and with conveniences for continued study. Still less are the book-stacks generally designed with a view to frequentation by a large number of workers. Compactness of storage must be sacrificed to convenience of movement in consulting books, if we are to have our libraries workshops for research. This plan of building is costly both in space and money. But anything less expensive of both is more costly in those precious hours

and minutes which our scholars, burdened with executive and teaching duties, can spare for research. If books are badly lighted, stored in stacks with narrow and dark aisles, remote from tables and study rooms, and dusty into the bargain, how great the loss of efficiency!

But if instruction and research are too often but ill-cared-for in college libraries, what of that subtle thing we call culture? Culture, to be sure, cometh not with understanding. It defies analysis, and it does not necessarily result from ample provision and and forethought any more than a humble and a contrite heart necessarily arises from what used to be called "the means of grace." But still less does it arise from the utter absence of the things ordinarily associated with it. And so far as culture comes from intimate, daily contact with books of high character, it can not be produced where books of this sort and people are not brought together on terms of ease and familiarity.

In fact, as I study our college curricula and our college plants, I am frequently led to ask myself whether we are honest in our invitation to students to come to us for four or more years. I am no *laudator temporis acti*. But to me the very success of our old and narrow college curriculum seems a challenge to us who have departed so far from its tradition. The emphasis in our old American col-

leges used to be on training that produced *men*. It did not produce scholars, nor was it a vocational preparation. Lowell's plea for the university in which nothing useful was taught was (more than even he knew) a true apology for the education which made the college men of his day leaders of their time. Now that time has gone. Plain living, to be sure, is coming back into academic circles by sheer force of need. But is high thinking dwelling with it? Our world is a very different place in this year of grace from that New England whose college graduates, trained in letters and mathematics alone, became lawyers by study in an office, doctors by being apprenticed to a physician, ministers by way of the theological seminary, and leaders in politics by native force appealing to moral issues. We have changed our college training in almost every subject taught and we have added so many subjects that our very announcements are thicker than ten years' catalogs of the old days. But are we making men—and women—as did our fathers? Men trained to logical processes of thought, to exact attainment in mathematics or pure science, to familiarity with at least a few great authors, able to speak on their feet and to write clear and forceful English? If we are not so training men, why ask them to go to college?

The ignorance of the average student on all cul-

tural subjects really passes belief. You can "start something" by a reference to the All-American football team, or to a political topic or nowadays to socialism, but when you sound the undergraduate on things literary, artistic, musical, geographical, or historical, you find, as a rule, mere blank lack of knowledge. He is untrained in matters of color or form, he generally lacks musical taste, and he ignores the significance of scientific discovery. Can libraries help this state of mind? Certainly they can not unless they are inviting in plan, well equipped with books and journals, and not kept down in their books and magazines to the subjects of instruction in the college curriculum. As a nation we have contributed but little to the fine arts or to critical judgments on things of the spirit. There is every evidence that we have wakened in the last three decades to our artistic and cultural shortcomings. But the new regard for form and color and beauty of line shown in the erection of fifty-odd museums of art in American cities in the past thirty years has penetrated to few of our colleges, and to the college libraries perhaps least of all. Happy are institutions like Oberlin whose new Art Gallery is a veritable inspiration. Happy also those few libraries which, themselves beautiful, have been given the means to make beauty and truth attractive through books.

What then may I offer as a practical program in the

face of the shortcomings with which I have perhaps wearied you? This is a practical age and it seems largely peopled by folk—like myself—born in Missouri.

First with regard to instruction—I would urge the definite recognition of the fact that the college library is the sole laboratory for all the studies which we term humane, and a training ground for a great part of those we call scientific. As a laboratory for the humanities, it demands money, the massed laboratory funds for these subjects. If given a reasonable portion of the total college income—at least six, better ten, per cent—it should soon be adequate in its book supply and its service to the demands of teaching. Without some such provision, it will always be starved.

Its building or quarters should differentiate sharply between functions. It is not hard to manage this—the difficult thing is to get architects and trustees and presidents to see the problem. Required reading, for example, can be handled expeditiously enough and quietly also, if only segregated from general reading and research. Advanced instruction is very simply cared for, if it, too, is planned in advance. And the cultural effect of direct contact with the library's store of books can be secured—and what a boon it is!—in most colleges by taking a leaf out of the open-access plan of public libraries. No

matter how plain the library's quarters, proper exhibit space, well used, will aid in developing the cultural side of the library work. And a cheery reading room, furnished with plenty of books and magazines on open shelves will do more than exhibits. Mark Hopkins once said that a boy couldn't rub up against the college buildings for four years without absorbing some Latin. By the same token he can't see interesting things in print about him for four years and continuously resist the impulse to read for himself. Plan for this sort of result, and you get it. Let things drift—and they drift.

But when we come to research the program is not so easy. Here no amount of goodwill may at once or easily overcome the inherent difficulty—that is, lack of the books. Coöperation with other libraries, the using of the library resources of the state or region as one instrument, is the most practical suggestion I can offer. This means coöperation with public libraries, and with national and state agencies. It means pooling of interests and a definite resolve to build up the strong collections along the line of their strength. The inter-library loan is in its infancy. Some day we shall have really rapid postal service by way of the air, and books may go in safety from Cleveland to Cincinnati in two or three hours time and be back the next day. In many European countries the government franks books sent from

one library to another. In this country—thanks to wholesome sentiment—we do this only for books for the blind. Surely our intellectual leaders should deserve as good treatment as those defectives whose plight appeals to sympathy. Thus we may sometime cheaply and quickly aid each other.

But coöperation means more than lending. It means refraining from buying in some field in which a neighbor is strong. At Michigan we do not, for example, buy genealogy, just because the Detroit Public Library is rich in that field appealing to so many people. We do not buy unusual books that we know are in the White Collection in the Cleveland Public Library. We try to make stronger our Shakespeare and English Drama collections rather than pay extravagant prices for minor American poets. This means self-denying ordinances for many a college library, if the plan be carried out. But it likewise means effective research work in our colleges and universities. If this association should begin now to limit fields, to agree to lend freely, to coöperate with the state and the public libraries of Ohio, if it should pool its purchasing powers, and should even agree to send students from one college to another to work in certain special collections, in ten years' time research facilities in Ohio would be so vastly improved that there would be no need to fear for the future of Ohio scholarship. Men would

seek places in Ohio faculties instead of fleeing to the great city universities. The college libraries of the state would function as a single instrument of research. And this is not Utopian—it is a severely practical plan born of experience and based on a knowledge of conditions.

Of course this sort of thing demands the professionally trained librarian as a director of the college or university library. Without his care and oversight, the libraries will continue to function but haltingly. Our librarians have been seeing visions and dreaming dreams as a result of their war work. One of those dreams is of the chance to prove what they can do for the college world, if given the means and the help. That dream may be fulfilled very shortly, if you but sense the vast possibilities of coöperation in the library work of a region, and the need of a plan in your home library work. Drifting in education leads nowhere. Least of all does it produce success.

THE LIBRARY AND POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION[1,2]

I have been asked to speak on the subject "The library an essential agent in conserving and advancing the results of formal school education." To approach such a formidable topic we must first face the problem presented; must understand its scope and its meaning. Fundamental in any consideration of this subject is the question of how large a part of the citizenship of the country has had any formal education at all; that is, how far do our schools actually reach the population of school age of the United States?

It was a very disagreeable shock to most Americans to read the figures about illiteracy in the National Army, a shock tempered only in part by the explanation that they were based on inability to read and write the English language. It would perhaps be an equally severe shock to the average taxpayer, who has become accustomed to lavish expenditures for schools, to realize how very large is the number of people who manage to avoid even the merest rudiments of formal education, either by direct

[1] An address at the Educational Congress, Albany, May, 1919.

[2] *School and Society*, vol. XI, no. 262, pp. 1–10, January 2, 1920.

escape from all schooling, or by dropping out after a few terms. Despite our compulsory school laws, and despite child-labor laws, it is a matter of common knowledge to all schoolmen that there is a steady dropping away after the earlier years. To this we have become so accustomed that we ordinarily take the facts for granted, and fail to realize their significance to society. Masses of our citizenship have had but a few terms in school and other masses have escaped formal education altogether. It is perhaps not too much to say that the average American citizen—to say nothing of the notoriously illiterate mass of foreign-born dwelling among us—has had so little schooling that it has formed a minor part of his education.

What has educated the unschooled or the partly-schooled? It is of course silly to deny that they have had an education—every adult human being has had one. Primarily, of course, it has been their contact with their kind, their social life which has trained them. And this is, equally of course, true of even the most highly developed product of the schools. President Wilson once remarked at Princeton—and it was one of his most profound observations on college life—that there was fully as much education going on in the college between four in the afternoon, when the classes closed, and eight in the morning, when they began, as between eight and

four. The home is the primary center of early education—and its efficiency is said to be sadly weakened of late years. But by bitter necessity, his occupation, his business, is the chief agent in the education the average mortal secures. I need not labor the proposition—it is so true and so patent that most professional educators never see it at all. It is the struggle of wits in the earning of daily bread that educates in the truest and most effective sense the ordinary man or woman.

Important factors in average education are the various occupations of such leisure hours as come to most folk. Whether it is a game of pool, or attendance on a baseball game, some form of sport enjoyed either as a witness or as a partaker, dancing, cards, a social smoke, the theater, the movies, or what not—recreation and amusement have their share in educating us. A very large share it is, too, and it is likely to become larger with that shortening of the working day which seems inevitable. The church has a part in education, to some extent a formal part in teaching, as well as in service, sermon, and social ministration. Clubs of all sorts, associations, unions, societies, have their share. Man is molded by other men in his work and in his play.

And then there is print: *not* books merely, but all printed things. Newspapers first—and for many, many thousands last also, and all the time! Trade-

papers, too, and pamphlets and posters. The number of newspaper readers in these United States must, it would seem, include every one who can read. The number of journals is legion. They all have their share in the education—such as it is—which our average man gets. And the weeklies! Not alone the ubiquitous *Post* which is read by perhaps one twentieth of our population each week, but scores of others, from the county newspapers to the obscurest trade-journal. Then there are the monthly magazines—many of them very cheap, and, I fear you would say, nasty also. We are the most newspapered and magazined nation on earth, I suppose, although I never dared get into the class of statisticians—you know their reputation. And last—and very much least, so far as effect on our masses goes—there are books. A hundred men read newspapers every day of their lives for one who reads a book even occasionally. Thus are the unschooled educated by their kind and by print.

May I interject a word at this point? The education thus achieved is by no means necessarily bad. It is merely imperfect and inadequate. No matter how much schooling a man has had, he will not escape education by his fellows and by the newspapers. He will, let us hope, supplement both by wisdom gained from books and teachers.

As the years go on, and as our schools grow, more

persons in proportion to the whole mass will have had formal training in a high school. And yet their number is both actually and relatively small at the present day. It is notorious that attendance on the early years of high school greatly outnumbers that in the later years, while the graduates generally form but a fraction of the number entering. Looking at secondary education from any advanced or even from a general viewpoint, its results seem rather slim and meager, particularly for those who have no further schooling. It may well be questioned whether the adolescent of eighteen leaving high school has any very profound knowledge or unusual equipment. He is, however, far more susceptible to the influence of print and of the higher forms of amusement than is the youth of the same age who lacks his training. To him books, in particular, make a direct appeal, however shallow his judgments on them. As a rule most high-school students have come into active contact with one or more foreign languages. This means far more to their education than is often apparent to the critics of curricula. Whatever may be the sum total of the effect of the study of foreign languages, there is slight question that it broadens in a peculiar way the mental horizon of the student. Such study awakens him to the existence of other literatures as the reading of the vernacular ordinarily does not. Most high-school

students get some instruction in history—and they all in these days are put through several years of what is known as "English." They are not made competent critics of the great problems of life and thought by their high-school training; they are given the means to read widely and to base their conclusions on at least wider data than newspapers alone afford.

Then there is a small, a very small, percentage of our population who have had a collegiate, professional or technical education. This percentage is slowly but surely increasing, and is ordinarily, of course, regarded by teachers and professional "educators" as a leaven destined to raise popular taste and to form the opinions of the multitude. Thanks largely to our state universities and our city colleges our college graduates do not come from the homes of the wealthy and the urban middle class alone, but represent to an ever increasing degree the homes of farmers and of wage-earners as well. There is small question in my mind that it is his receptivity to new ideas which chiefly distinguishes the college graduate from his fellows—and particularly to new ideas meeting him through the medium of print. A student well trained in the liberal arts is notoriously likely to be more proficient in professional and technical studies than one versed only in the elements of such studies—largely, it would seem, by reason of his familiarity

with books and printed things and his agility resulting from a variety of mental exercises. Toward books at least such products of the college and technical schools are likely to be at once friendly, accustomed, easy—and yet discriminating. There is no mystery about the printed page which rouses either undue reverence or instinctive distrust. Your college man has seen too much of the manufacturing of such stuff.

We have then—as regards the results of formal education, schooling, or whatever we should call it—a mass of partly lettered folk, a slightly smaller mass of what that peppery Irishman, Richard Stanyhurst, so aptly termed "meanly lettered," and a small number of better-trained minds. All of them in our democracy vote on an equality. As a matter of fact, those whom the world's work has educated to leadership come largely—but by no means wholly, as commencement orators would have us believe—from the smaller group whose formal training has been long and thorough. What is the attitude of the whole toward print—particularly toward books? The answer to that question establishes the present, and to a great degree the future, status of the people's library in our communities.

Supposing that practically all our people *can* read —save that per cent whose eyes are holden by lack

of teaching—*what do they read?* As I said above, they read journals, newspapers, magazines—and a very few books. The laws, postal and economic, make for the publication of periodicals of all sorts. They are distinctly the present-day mode, whether in publishing the results of the most recondite scientific research or in reporting baseball games. The trades and occupations too have their journals, frequently half a dozen to each calling. Look over any news-stand and for once note the magazine titles, particularly of those you never read or think of reading. Compare notes with any grocer or barber or clothier or bricklayer. They all with one accord will tell you that they read their own trade papers. From the labor union to the Society of Mechanical Engineers, every organization issues a weekly, monthly or quarterly paper. Moreover, the pamphlet which in the eighteenth century outran the newspapers in popularity—thanks largely to the stamp-tax—has again come into its own. I have no means of compiling figures on the production of pamphlets in the civilized world in the last five years, but I can bear witness—as can every librarian—to the marvelous number produced by the war and its varied phases of propaganda. They must have reached literally hundreds of thousands of titles in Western Europe and North America alone. And they are read by thousands to whom—

seemingly—a bound book is anathema. But good newspapers—really great newspapers—are becoming less and less common. The morning press is before our eyes slowly passing away under the daily assaults of the cheap evening paper, run essentially to sell advertising and for no other end. Commercial journalism is a highly profitable business, and the purveying of real news is one of its slightest concerns—at least, so it seems to an observer, prejudiced, no doubt, because always in search of real news, the happenings of the whole world. Despite the destruction of huge forests yearly to furnish the pulp-paper for these countless editions, it is to be doubted whether we have any dissemination of accurate information at all commensurate to the waste of trees. But we all read—and buy! Doubtless we shall continue to follow this river of text in an ever-widening margin of advertising to the end of our days—or until the river runs out entirely.

I do not exaggerate this paucity of news. If there is anything on which the American people should have had abundant and accurate information during the years 1918 and 1919, it is on events and conditions in Eastern and Central Europe. But we all know how little we have had of real information. I don't know, you don't know, what has actually been going on in Warsaw and Moscow and Budapest,

in Sofia and Odessa and Constantinople, since the armistice was signed in last November! Those little papers published weekly in Russian and Polish and Bohemian in certain small cities and towns in our country have carried pages of real letters and news accounts, I am told; but not so even our great metropolitan dailies. We have been fed with fantastic stores from one side or the other, each more lurid than the other—but what are the *facts?* Certainly they are not found in our ordinary journals. In truth it is only in our libraries—and then only when they are conducted on progressive lines—that a man (not possessed of abundant means) can get at the real news of the day. Here he can find papers of varying shades of opinion and belief. Here he can read pamphlets and journals which the man in the street necessarily misses. Here he can correct the omissions of the local or the metropolitan press. He can—if he will—inform himself. He can not at the club or in the train or in his home back of the stockyards.

But he can do none of these things if the librarians have not been awake to the news situation. If they have not understood the difficulties, and if their boards of trustees have failed to back them up in providing the unusual journals and the less common papers. Not alone the ordinary run of magazines and papers which are found in the homes of culti-

vated people, but the new, the unusual, the foreign, should be in even moderate-sized public libraries, if they are to fulfill their function of supplying information and real news to the people who support them.

Did you ever stop to consider the relation between the modern apartment which has no room for bookshelves, the modern house too small for our fathers' copious black-walnut book-cases, and the gradual decay of the book-store in the United States? Do you ever ask yourself what sort of books children grow up with now-a-days? Did you ever—as many a children's librarian has done—try to find out what books are actually owned in the homes from which the school children come? If you did, I am sure you have been appalled at the paucity of books—the actual dearth of books you have supposed every one knew by sight at least. The Bible is still the world's best seller—but there are thousands of homes, American homes at that, without one. In fact there are thousands of homes in our land without *any* books except mail-order catalogues and text-books which the children bring back from school.

And did you ever seriously stop to inquire as to the sort of books children ordinarily see in small newsshops? Go into any city or town and make a list of the titles of the books in the windows of the little stores where tobacco, candy, "notions," and cheap books

crowd one another. I made a study of the books exposed for sale on West Madison Street in Chicago twenty-five years ago. It was a revelation to me. And only the other day in Buffalo I walked up from the station to the Public Library, and incidentally inspected the windows of two shops. Well, I found that the public taste had not altered very much! Jesse James and the Younger Brothers were still there, in a trifle more attractive guise. Instead of "Scarlet Sin" and other equally startling and fetching titles (with crude cover illustrations of the nude!) there was a sheet calling itself as a sub-title "America's most spicy sex-magazine." The dime novel of my boyhood (by no means all bad, far from it!) had been changed only in outward form and the aeroplane and motor substituted for the hero's or the villain's dashing steed. Yes—the children of the poor have an alluring set of titles offered them daily. It is a wonder that the children's rooms in the library make any headway against this display—and really the fact that the children throng to them seems to me a tribute to the essential soundness of boy and girl nature.

And did you ever try to buy a book in one of our very small towns or villages? How often have I endeavored to find something even passable in the little, fly-specked group in the local drug-store. The last time I was marooned in a village for twenty-

four hours I could only discover the *Detective Story Magazine*, having, I must confess, already read that week's *Saturday Evening Post*. By the way, the most interesting part of said Detective Magazine was the half dozen pages of advertisements—mainly for news of persons who had disappeared and never communicated with their families. But what is a mere annoyance to the passing stranger must represent a serious difficulty to the residents. Books are now sold in large numbers by the mail-order houses, but there are good book-stores in too few of our towns and villages. The department stores have well-nigh driven the retail book-sellers out of business in the cities. The fact is that our population—despite the enormous number of periodicals—is coming to be more and more dependent on libraries for even a sight of good books, to say nothing of the chance to read them. I offer no explanation of these conditions. I merely call your attention to the facts. On libraries lies the responsibility of furnishing printed matter other than the sheet bought for a cent or two and discarded in the street-car on the way home from work. Post-school education so far as it is to be got from books, is likely for nine-tenths of our people to be got from books in libraries. Private libraries are few and small outside of a select number of homes. Book-stores are fewer year by year despite heroic efforts

of booksellers and publishers. Libraries are more than *an* agent in conserving and advancing the results of formal school instruction; they are in most cases *the* agent, the only one possible for the average young man or woman seeking further knowledge from books.

But no such statement as this—however positively made—gets very far. Unless people acquire early in life the habit of using libraries in an efficient and comfortable way, there is little chance of the library aiding very much in conserving the results of schooling. The chief task of librarians at the present day appears to be that of overcoming the indifference of the community to their wares—and the inertia resulting from that indifference. It is a rare child who says to himself on graduating from school: "Now I must keep what I have won. I'll go regularly to the library and read three nights a week." Unless the library has established direct contact with school children, contact apart from school work as well as in it, it is vain to expect much use from the child released from the bondage of school duties to the greater servitude of daily labor. It is vitally important, if the results of education are to be conserved, that both librarians and teachers realize the need of cultivating the habitual and voluntary use of the library by children. If as a permanent result of schooling and of the persistent

and intelligent effort of children's librarians, there is formed the habit of turning to the library for help in work and for recreation, then the results of school training are without doubt in a fair way to be not only kept, but deepened and strengthened.

If this contact is lost, it devolves on the librarian to restore it. Planning for such contact is one of the chief duties of a librarian—a duty too often overlooked. No matter how excellent the library on the technical side, if it stands unused and empty, if young people do not seek it of their own accord, then it is a poorly managed library. I shall not weary you with advice nor describe the subtle and and effective methods of advertising now coming into vogue. Window-displays in stores and in the library building, efforts to seize current interest in various topics and to turn people to books about them; all these things are but aids toward making the contact between people and books. It is the librarian's chief problem. He is gradually learning ways of meeting it, but he should surely begin with school-children and hope never to lose them from his roll of clients. Such other aids to the creation and maintenance of this contact as are in vogue, lectures, story-hours, and the like, may well serve his purpose. But it is the conscious study of this problem as his chief business which will most surely win the results aimed at. Each community, each group in the

community, presents a different phase of this absorbing task. Bringing people and books together in the right way and at the right time is, must always be, the librarian's largest work. And on his success to a great degree depends the conserving of the results of school training.

But if the problem be vital not alone to the success of libraries, but to that of civilization, no less vital is a clear conception of what is aimed at and hoped for in promoting the reading habit beyond the school experience. The most precious fruits of education, those which most of all require care and help for their persistence, their preservation, are those ideals of conduct and those standards of taste which teachers have striven to instill. Not geometrical theorems or algebraic formulae remain in the memory and become part of the mental fiber of a youth versed in mathematics—but a residuum of study which recognizes the necessity for logical demonstration and for exact reasoning and reckoning. The things of the spirit are the highest product of formal education. Their conservation is more imperative a duty, more honorable a care intrusted to our libraries than the purveying of business information or of recipes for cooking jam tarts. No agency is more potent in this preservation of ideals than certain types of books. Poetry and the drama above all serve this purpose. We respond to their

appeal to our generosity, our loftiness of purpose. our imagination, our moral sense. They take us out of ourselves for the time. That katharsis which so impressed Aristotle as the supreme function of poetry is still its great apology. We *are* purged of the dross of self and gain and strife while we rise to the heights of the poet's fancy, or follow breathlessly the rapid movement of dramatic action. And to poetry and drama the modern age has added the story, the supreme vehicle for conveying the message of the great artist, the great teacher. Than these three there are no greater or worthier means of keeping alive lofty idealism, high purpose, serene temper.

In fact in this day the civic and educational value of recreative reading seems to be slightly obscured in favor of supposedly practical and informational books. But on a little reflection any one of us must admit that there are few influences more pregnant with possibilities of high results than recreational reading. By every means should it be encouraged by librarians; instead of which we find them pointing with pride to its decrease. Eighty per cent of fiction circulated is generally a lamented and decried item in an annual report. But to me it is properly an occasion for congratulation, for pride. If the fiction be good, wholesome stuff, rattling good stories, exciting and interesting novels, purposeful, artistic

studies of real life, then the more of it read, the better. I would rather my boy would read a good story than spend the same time in a pool-room. I would rather read a good story myself than write papers for educational congresses. And I would be far prouder to think that I had introduced a community to such clean and wholesome books as, for instance, *Back Home*, *The Prodigal Judge*, *A Certain Rich Man*, *Gold*—not to mention hundreds of others—than to know that I had helped some scores of people to information of passing moment and interest. The scholar does not decry recreational reading. He rather recalls Cicero's noble words in the Oration for Archias on the worth of humane letters, their constant companionship in duress and in joy, their comfort and their permanence. He recalls Dante's eulogy on Vergil—and he knows from his own life, what the recreation afforded by works of the imagination means to him. Denunciation of fiction reading is really crass Philistinism. The guiding of choice in fiction is a precious privilege granted to librarians. And in exercising it they must not forget the stern competition which they run with the shop window stories and with every other form of amusement.

One of the most successful aids to holding children to a habit of reading is the keeping up of the interest in some subject which has attracted them in their

school days. It is a poor boy or girl who develops no hobby in school life—at least who does not get started on the way to make a hobby out of an interest. His schooling may or may not advance him very far on that road. But the library can frequently give him the opportunity which the school can not. To the end of keeping alive an interest already aroused, the library and the school should be in close touch. The librarian should have the means of letting pupils know that there are scores, hundreds, even thousands of books on subjects which they first meet in class. For example, the geography classes open up the whole fascinating array of books on travel in the library. An exhibit in the school, or a visit of a class to the library may reveal to students possibilities of reading which will hold their attention and draw them to the library for years. Wherever there is a boy or girl genuinely interested in something on which books are written, there is a chance for the librarian to conserve—yes, to advance—the results of formal study. It is perfectly proper for him to buy books for the express purpose of promoting and keeping interest in some subject which has originated in the school. It is perfectly legitimate and indeed highly advisable to conserve clients to the library by keeping up human interest in all manner of topics—even when interest develops into that sort of hobby which makes life uncomfortable for the neighbors.

It is a proper thing also for the librarian to try hard to serve that smaller class which has received higher education. Most of us have stretched funds to the utmost to do it. But too few of the librarians of the smaller towns and cities have understood how easily by means of the inter-library loan they may serve people whose needs are so special and so advanced that they far outrun the meager resources of small libraries. A librarian who is alive to the possibilities of borrowing unusual books for an unusual need, who knows the resources in books of the larger libraries, is a veritable blessing to the scholar isolated by occupation or need in an out-of-the-way place. To him such a librarian brings—at too high a charge as yet—the resources of the whole country. In fact practically *everything* is available by means of photoduplication—only the process costs a good bit. We shall yet get that cost down to a trifle, and then a librarian will have an agency of tremendous power in conserving his clientele and in serving his town. Service to business is on much the same footing. It can and should be given—but too few are able to give it. The small town or small city library will fulfill its educational function only when it pays a living salary to a live librarian.

Were the educational function of the library confined to conserving the results both spiritual and intellectual of formal schooling, it would have ample

justification for its existence, even aside from its services of another sort. But fortunately the library's work in advancing the results of formal education is equally patent, although necessarily such work appeals to a smaller group. What this group lacks in number, however, it gains in definiteness. Vague problems, vaguely felt, are seldom well solved. But when we face very definite and particular needs, we generally make some measure of advance in meeting them. Such a need is found in the present efforts to establish continuation schools of various sorts. With the work of these schools you are perforce more familiar than I. You know how far they are vocational, how far they are elementary, how far advanced. But unless I miss my guess there are none of them which could not profit by close contact with the public library. The library can and should aid the instruction with books. It can easily provide (either at the school or in its own quarters) books both directly helpful in the instruction given and those leading on to further study. Night-schools and continuation schools offer a ripe field for the library's coöperation—a field perhaps as yet too much neglected.

There is pressing need in this country for Americanization work, for unfolding in a sympathetic manner the history, the government, the spirit of America to its foreign population. About this need

and this movement also you are doubtless better informed than I. May I say, in passing, that it is my conviction that so-called Americanization will succeed just so far as it is done in a friendly, neighborly, sympathetic way? If we say to these folk—"Forget all you are and have been! Become like us! Be Americans!" we are not likely to win them to that spirit of democracy which we hold as our choicest possession. But if we lead them to know our ideals, to understand our ways, to comprehend their rights and duties as part of our body politic, if in short, we try to have them keep the best of their own past and take on our own spirit as well, we may have some hope of success. And the public library can do—is doing—much to aid. It can assist in direct instruction and can furnish much material in addition. There are few avenues of its work so promising of results, so well worth following. If we do our duty by continuation schools and Americanization work we shall surely justify our claims to recognition as an essential agent in popular education.

But not alone in these formal classes is popular education carried on. Few people realize the extent to which the American people are organized into clubs and societies. If you will but cast up your own bills for annual dues of one sort and another and will then multiply them by some such figure

as one hundred million, you will begin to have some notion of how far we are grouped into social units. Not all clubs offer a field for the library's work. But it is wholly incorrect to suppose that the women's clubs alone read papers and use books to get them up. In any community, urban or rural, there are literally scores of clubs which might find books and periodicals of great assistance in their work. It is the librarian's privilege and duty to seek these out and to minister to their needs—of course with tact and understanding. They have a *right* to his services, and by those services the results of school training may well be advanced. The fact that the women's clubs have discovered the library is no reason why they should capture it. The same sort of service—rendered frequently in a different way—may be given to a great variety of other organizations. And thereby the library furthers popular education in a definite way, instead of shooting in the air.

Perhaps the strangest gap in the corporate relations of our public libraries has been their almost total failure to get into touch with labor unions. To ignore the unions in the present age is to cut ourselves off from one of the strongest and most vital forces moving in our social cosmos. As individuals many thousand union members make use of their libraries. And I have known some few

librarians who have succeeded in keeping in active and efficient touch with the unions as such. Labor is undoubtedly going to secure a shorter working day than has been customary. Those hours released from toil must be spent somewhere. Need I say more? Is not the librarian's duty and privilege plain in that very statement by itself? And is any duty more imperative than that of winning and holding to the reading habit the *men* of our land? It is *not* going to be done by the methods or the books which have been most in vogue among us. But it needs to be done—and that right soon.

And then there is the real student who is trying to keep up his studies—frequently amid the cares of his business or profession. In these days when so much of the world's discussion of science and the arts is produced in journals, the plight of the student lacking access to such journals is frequently pitiable. He can seldom buy more than a fraction of what he needs. He must depend on the library to aid him. And generally the librarian is forced to regard him as but one unit demanding much for his own use as against some thousands demanding little. But I appeal to the good sense of librarians and to their intelligence in urging them *not* to forget their duty toward scholarship. The high-school teacher trying to keep up his university work in physics or biology or Greek or history *deserves* our

special aid and consideration. The young chemist in the big industrial plant, the young doctor with a a special interest, the lawyer working up a line he began in law school, the clergyman yet intent on some phase of his reading despite the calls on his time and his sympathies, the boy in the shops who digs away at Spanish—these are our rare and special clients. If we retain the spirit of the humanists, if we are true to the traditions of librarianship, we shall sacrifice much to aid such as these. We shall beg and borrow and buy for them. And we shall be of some little service, perchance, to the advancement of true learning.

There has come a great change in our library work. We librarians are convinced that we serve *all* the people—not a part alone, as most folk have supposed. We are trying to survey the whole field of our work—to understand our towns and cities and the countryside as well. We are studying them, charting the possibilities. We believe that we can make books useful and helpful to many people who seldom think of them. We are ready to coöperate with business and with labor, with schools and clubs and churches and homes. We serve all—and chiefly do we serve education, organized and individual. But no longer are we content to serve vaguely, indefinitely, hoping that we may somehow do good. We are striving for the actual, the concrete in service,

and we are reaching our aim more and more surely each year. Thus—and thus only—shall we succeed by the very definiteness of our aim and of our labors in conserving and in advancing the results of school training.

THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION AT THE CROSSROADS[1]

It is inevitable that we should recall tonight the amazing change in world conditions from the situation at the time of our last annual conference. Then the darkest days of the great war had indeed passed, though none of us could know for a certainty that the tide of German attack pressing on toward Paris had truly ebbed. The courageous and of a truth supremely daring offensive already launched by Marshal Foch in mid-June had just begun to put hope into the hearts of the allied peoples, stunned by the constantly widening and steadily renewed German offensives of the spring of 1918. The great days of Chateau-Thierry and the second Marne were those on which we met at Saratoga—anxious days on which our minds continually reverted to France and refused to concentrate even on problems of the library war service. We were more eager for the latest newspaper than for advice, inspiration, discussion on themes ordinarily absorbing to us. We adjourned just as the Germans were

[1] President's address at the Forty-first Annual Conference of the American Library Association, Asbury Park, N. J., June 23–27, 1919.

definitely driven across the Marne for the second time. And we adjourned confident (though no man ventured to say what he thought) that July of the next year would see us still struggling to end the business and to finish our share of the supreme task of western civilization—the final defeat of Germany and her allies! Indeed, so fearful were we, and rightly, that sterner sacrifices would be demanded of us, that we passed a resolution empowering our Executive Board to postpone this annual meeting, if the public emergency should be such that conventions and conferences would prove undesirable.

How different the national and international atmosphere today! The war won in November—our men returning as rapidly as they were ferried across the ocean—industry and agriculture resuming their wonted courses—problems of details of readjustment agitating nations and individuals—the Peace Congress almost over—a league of nations almost an actuality—disarmament going on the world over—and stricken humanity endeavoring to bind up its wounds and to console its broken-hearted. The note of our meeting today is necessarily one of triumph and jubilation. We are not forgetful of the problems of peace, many of them as ugly as those of war (or so they seem to our still taut nerves). But after all the war is behind us. We are living through

a period of rapid change, and our foes, if foes there be, are at least likely to be those of our own household. We doubtless have enormously difficult days ahead of us, but happily our own land has been spared the sorrows that have afflicted our noble French and Belgian allies, and we are materially and morally less stricken by war, less worn and weary, more able to face the future with smiling confidence, resting assured that the American spirit which brought us through war will still carry us on to a larger life and a greater service in peace.

And so we meet again after a year to take up with renewed zest and energy those problems of our work which we are accustomed to attack in our annual gatherings. And yet we are none of us quite the same as we were in 1917 or 1916. Our work, while still "the trivial round and common task," is not done, can not be done, in exactly the same spirit as of old. We have dreamed dreams and seen visions, and we are turning to the future of our own library service with a profound conviction that it *is* service —public service of the highest type. To that end we are met, to consider our war service and to render an account of our stewardship in that branch of our labors; to transact our routine business and to hear and discuss reports of our committees; but chiefly to survey our own capacities, and to talk over the possibilities of the near future. This is a forward-

looking conference. No other could be held by progressive Americans in this year of grace 1919.

In planning the papers for this series of meetings your Program Committee has had in mind just three purposes. First, we have felt that we should emphasize and make of practical import our committee reports. Too frequently these have been perfunctory and have received but little discussion. So far as possible these reports have been printed in advance, and, instead of being read in full, will be presented in summary only in order to leave time for discussion. They represent much work on the part of the committees, and I bespeak for them your interest and your comment.

The most important—certainly the most interesting report—is likely to be that of the War Service Committee, which is now before you in printed form. Naturally the war service looms large in our eyes, and we have devoted to it no small share of our general program. One of the natural consequences of that service—or at least what we librarians feel should be one of its results—is the establishment of similar service on a permanent basis for the Army and Navy. We are most fortunate in the presence of very distinguished representatives of both branches of the service to speak upon this topic.

Our second theme is a statement of certain present day conditions in our American libraries. We

should have been glad to devote the major part of our time to this purpose of setting forth our conditions and resources. A few sample topics of necessity have to suffice us. But we present a preliminary report on plans for a complete survey, plans to which I shall revert later.

Finally we look to the immediate future. Here again we can offer but certain phases of a complete forecast. But we have tried, as I said a moment since, to make this a forward-looking meeting, even if necessarily our topics are but a selection from many. Things historical—save of our war service—things theoretical, things technical, we have tried for this occasion at least to avoid.

It has seemed to me peculiarly fitting that the president of the Association should at this time review the work of this body and perhaps endeavor to show certain possibilities which have revealed themselves to him in the course of his term of office. I do not apologize for speaking *to* the American Library Association *about* the American Library Association. It does seem that we may well spare the time and strength to confer a little about our own affairs and our means of doing business collectively, in the interests of librarianship and of American libraries.

At the Niagara Falls Conference in 1903, Mr. J. N. Larned, then retired from active public ser-

vice though by no means from active work, spoke very convincingly of the life of this Association as a body. He said to a little group of younger people, what he later repeated on the platform before the Association as a whole, that coming back after an interval of several years he was conscious of the fact that the American Library Association had a life, an organism, apart from the individuals who composed it. "I feel it," said he, "it is almost palpable; it exists, it influences you and me. We can not escape it, it forms us, and yet we form it." How true these words were the experience of fifteen years has proved again and again. The Association has a vigor, a power, an influence of which we are perhaps but dimly conscious. That power and influence has worked hitherto chiefly on professional librarians. It has molded their thoughts and guided their actions. It has stimulated their ideals and has kept up their standards. It has worked largely as a sort of professional public opinion, functioning more or less well as circumstances have permitted. The great shock of war has, however, released an enormous latent energy in our Association and in our calling outside its ranks, for not all strong librarians are members of our body. We are conscious today of greater possibilities in library work and in the concerted work of librarians than we ever sensed in days gone by. Much of this feeling is naturally

the result of war service. It is in every way proper, then, to inquire how far we have measured up to the opportunities the war has thrust upon us. And further, what are the next steps?

To a thoughtful person it was a very significant thing that the United States Government through the Commission on Training Camp Activities applied to this Association to render service along strictly professional lines. It asked us as librarians to contribute our professional serivces, just as it asked the the doctors and the chemists to serve as doctors and chemists. That such a thing was possible shows that the value and need of the librarian's work in massing, arranging, and interpreting books had at last gained the recognition which it deserves. No single fact in connection with our war service has more significance for us as we face the problems of peace than this recognition. Our war service was sought and was performed on the ground of our special fitness to give it. The history of the library war service has been one of steady gain in this sort of recognition, for the discernment of certain far-seeing men in Washington did not mean that their judgment must necessarily be final and instantly accepted. Nay, it was their initial wisdom which made possible the gradual winning by the librarians of a professional status in the minds of thousands of commanding officers, soldiers, sailors, marines. I

believe it is now true that even the scornful and the doubting among the military have seen that books plus librarian are very different from books alone. And it has been no small gain for us as a profession that scores of our folk, mostly our younger members, have had to win their way to this esteem under novel and difficult circumstances. They have had to make good in most cases with very little preparation of the way by others. How hard that task was, and how strenuous and unremitting the labor involved in setting up a new work amid adverse conditions, few who were not themselves engaged in it can understand. Long hours, obstacles innumerable, delays, red tape, failure of books and of supplies, cold, wet, even lack of sleep, were the lot of many of our pioneers in the war service. The general testimony is, however, most gratifying. They did make good. The exceptions were few enough to "prove the rule." And as I look about me and see these men and women who have worn and are wearing our uniform, these younger folk who have toiled incessantly and with good spirit and good humor at manifold and difficult tasks, I am moved to no small pride and thankfulness. In the name of the American Library Association I salute you all, present and absent! We who could not go acknowledge to the full your sacrifice, your devotion, your skill, your energy. We share in the

honor reflected on our calling by your labors. The name *librarian* henceforth means something to millions of men because of your work.

And to those also who planned and toiled to carry out this war service are due the hearty thanks of the American Library Association, and them also I salute in your name. From the very first days of our entrance into the war until now—two full years —certain officers and committee members of this body have been unsparing in their devotion of strength, time, and effort to the library war service. They have worked to raise money and books, have sacrificed time and strength to attend committee meetings, have neglected their own work to do this patriotic service, and have given themselves generously in your behalf, in the name of the American Library Association. You know them all, and it would be easier, less invidious perhaps, to mention no names. But while recognizing that all of them have been devotion itself, I cannot refrain from stating publicly the obligations which we owe to a certain few. There is our secretary, Mr. George B. Utley, who has served as executive secretary of the War Service Committee, who has known no limit of hours for two years, and who has carried the greatly increased burden of his regular work in addition to all this war work. There is the chairman of the War Finance Committee, Dr. Frank P.

Hill, to whose untiring and truly heroic efforts we owe the raising of the first war service fund of eighteen hundred thousand dollars, and the second fund of three and a half million. There is the chairman of the War Service Committee, Mr. J. I. Wyer, Jr., who has spent his time and strength, I fear too lavishly, on the war service and on the work of the Committee of Eleven in charge of the United War Work Campaign Fund. No one who has not been a part of that work can realize the burden he has carried, and the way he has carried it. There is the associate general director of the war service, Mr. Carl H. Milam, to whom sixteen hours a day of the hardest kind of work seem a pleasing measure, and who has carried successfully administrative burdens which would have laid most of us on the shelf. And finally, there is the general director of the War Service, Dr. Herbert Putnam, of whom I can say no more than that we all marvel at his capacity for work, his administrative skill, his foresight and his penetration. Volunteer work, all of it! Money does not, cannot, pay for the sort of labor these men and their colleagues—for I speak of them all equally with these I have ventured to name—have lavished on *our* contribution to America in her hour of need. It is our part not only to recognize their labors, but to carry on their work, to carry its spirit back to our offices and desks, into our reading-rooms and stacks.

We librarians are bound to be and do more because of what these our colleagues have been and have done.

We are bound as an Association to do more—not as much or less—than we did before this emergency, this national crisis, showed us our power to do. This obligation is very real and vital and comes home to all of us. Just because the officers of the Association feel it so keenly, I have ventured to make it the topic for this address which our custom requires of each retiring president. But first in any consideration of our possible future activities there necessarily comes the question, "What sort of machinery do we have with which to work?" May we descend from thoughts of our accomplishments, and from our aspirations for future tasks to very practical considerations of our form of organization?

* * *

In the direction of smooth and rapid functioning I suggest that a simple scheme of things in which our Executive Board should serve virtually as a Board of Directors performing the work of the Association through committees of its own body would prove a signal advantage. In my judgment, our organization is far too complex. It should be simplified and made more efficient by following the example of business corporations. If we but detach

ourselves from the circumstances which have produced our present form of organization and view it from the standpoint of an efficiency engineer, we can see at once that it would benefit greatly by centralizing responsibility and authority. Some such process is a necessity, I believe, if we are to meet the demands which are pressing upon us.

I therefore urge that you consider this matter very carefully at the business sessions, for I am convinced that until the constitution of this Association permits concentration of authority and rapidity of action we shall never perform the work we ought to do. This conviction is the direct result of my observation in the past year when so many important matters have been before the officers of the Association. I know it is shared by many thoughtful persons, and I trust you will give it your attention.

What are these demands of which I have just spoken? The chief of them all comes from ourselves. We have seen the splendid spirit with which our library folk have responded to the call for their services in a time of national peril. We have felt both pride and satisfaction in the way the American Library Association has been doing big things in a big way. On every hand I hear librarians saying, "We *must* not lose this spirit—this momentum. We must keep it for our peace time work. We

need it. There must be no slackening, no slump, no dropping back, no disobedience to the vision." Do you not meet this sort of feeling and of talk? I do, wherever I go. Sometimes it takes one form, sometimes another, but it is there, constantly and always, this determination not to drop back into mere routine, not to let slip this sense of power. Can we, dare we, ignore this call to continuing service, service as a body, not merely as individuals. Whatever else we do here in this week, we must not, feel—and I am sure you all agree with me—we *must* not assume that with the war our collective responsibility ends, and we may now go back to 1917 and take up the old threads where we left off.

So strongly has this feeling been in the hearts of the officers of the Association that they felt confident that you would wish, would decide, would plan to go on to further corporate work in peace, work for the benefit of all libraries, and of communities having no libraries. To this end a library survey of the entire country was authorized by the Executive Board in January and entrusted to a Committee of Five on Library Service. This committee was charged with the duty of setting down the actual conditions of American libraries today, their incomes, their property, their staffs, their salaries, their methods, their practice. It is to report here on its plans. How great is the need for some such state-

ment of conditions, practice and standards, I can testify from repeated experiences during the past four months. "Can't you give us some *definite* statement of what it would cost to run a college library in the right way?" That was the demand the Ohio College Association made on me last April. "What should we as trustees expect our librarian to do?" has been asked of me a dozen times in the last year. "Is our library doing well for its income?" is a fair question for any citizen, whether a trustee or not. Some norm by which we can measure ourselves, some statement of practice, of salaries, of methods, of training, which trustees and librarians can set before them as a goal, or a point of departure, this is what the Committee of Five will try to draw up. To do it properly will be most costly, but then, so will any other piece of good work. If we are to go forward, we must first know where we stand. This we hope the Service Committee of Five will tell us, and I appeal to you all to second their efforts in your most hearty manner.

One of the amazing experiences of the library service for soldiers and sailors has been the repeated calls for similar service to civilians. The money contributed for war work has been used solely for war work, but it has been heart-breaking to refuse the many appeals for help—help which we could give, had we but the means. At the Council meet-

ing, which is open to all members, some of these kinds of work will be brought out by persons who have knowledge of them. But let me say in advance that we could keep an active force at work at headquarters doing perfectly legitimate library work not now being done by established agencies, had we the means. There is the continuing service to the Army and Navy, which we hope will be taken over by the Government; service to the merchant marine, now so sadly neglected, and so appealing in its demand; service to lighthouses and lightships, and to the coast guard; information and inspection service for communities in real need of expert advice, particularly in states having no library commissions; service to the blind, which is so costly and which so few local libraries are able to render effectively; service in organizing interlibrary loans, and thus making the resources of the whole country serve research; service in coöperative buying, in which we ought to bring to play for the benefit of us all the experience of buying for the war work; service in publicity which will recognize that the best publicity *is* service; service to practical bibliography, unlocking the treasures too frequently concealed in card catalogs; service in preparing all manner of union lists, to avoid much duplication of rare sets, and much bidding against one another; service in aid of special library training; service—but I will stop; why catalog

the various coöperative enterprises and public benefits in which we are eager to engage? The work is here and ready to our hands. The harvest needs but the reapers.

But, says doubting Thomas—for he is here, many of him—where is the money coming from to do all these fine things? Where, I ask, did the millions of books come from? What was the source of the millions of magazines? Who gave us nearly five million dollars for our war work? The American people only have to be convinced that we have a good thing, to give us all the money we need. If we can't convince them, then we won't get it. But we should, I am sure, have a friend in every man in both services who saw our book-plate on a book he read. If we can believe the tales we hear and the letters that come in, the boys believe in us and in our work. If, as I believe, we have *their* good-will, the rest is easy. The money will come, but not without asking, if also not for the asking. It will be your task at this conference, my fellow members, to decide whether you wish to make the venture, to ask for the money, to decide whether you believe enough in your work to try to make the American people believe in it.

A word in conclusion. The emergency work of the past two years has been done by a happy combination of our experienced leaders and our younger

men and women. If the American Library Association is to go forward, whether on the plans before us today or on any others, it matters not which; if the American Library Association is to go forward, it must be by the efforts of the younger generation. I see before me a few veterans who have been with the Association since its first meetings. We listened last year at Albany to him who was long its chief servant and its chief inspiration, Melvil Dewey. But, ladies and gentlemen, his words, prophetic as they were, marked the end of an epoch. The men of 1876 are almost all gone. The men who came into the work in the nineties are getting old. The war has shown the powers of those men and women who have come to us in the last two decades. To them belong the tasks of the near future. If ever we feared lest the men who should succeed Dewey and Winsor, Larned and Poole and Cutter, Fletcher and Brett, and our other pioneers should set a lower mark than theirs, that doubt has been dissolved by the last two years. Those who come after our pioneers are more than equal to the task. Together, if they will bear with the slower wits and less active bodies of us older men and women, we can carry the American Library Association on to greater and nobler service.

For very plainly we stand at the crossroads. Our war service is all but done. Six months will see the

end of it. We can of course go lumbering on, doing fairly well, as of old, our accustomed tasks. Or we can strike out into new fields, into ways of practical library service that are clearly open. I am confident of your choice, and more confident that we can not go back. We shall, I am sure, make 1919 memorable as the year of the great decision.

THE RECORD OF SCIENCE[1,2]

One learns by adversity—at least such is the popular belief, although the press dispatches from Europe during the past few months would seem to give the lie to this old adage. It used to be my fate to encounter at frequent intervals a genial friend of great distinction in the field of physics and astronomy, long engaged in high administrative functions, an alumnus of this university—altogether a man of great weight and substance, who endeavored each time we met to overwhelm my cherished ambitions by bringing forth with great gusto this aphorism, "Bibliography is the platitude of research!" So much did this phrase please him that he paraded it on many occasions, and I confess I used to dodge around the corner to avoid its rotund and sonorous condemnation of my own ways and works. I hope to show you that bibliography is the *foundation* of research, and that however level and flat that foundation may be, however dull may be the task of laying it deep and strong, no lasting and lofty superstructure may safely be reared, save on the secure footing of a knowledge of

[1] Address at the annual meeting of the Michigan Chapter of Sigma Xi, May 26, 1922.

[2] *Science*, vol. LVI, no. 1443, August 25, 1922.

previous work done by others, a knowledge resting necessarily even in the field of science on the much despised labor of the bibliographer.

There is prevalent on every university campus, I suppose, an impression—not among students alone—that the various branches of human knowledge are for practical purposes divided into two groups, the laboratory sciences and the book sciences. This is an extremely convenient and easy grouping—and it has certain elements of truth in its facile cleavage of the field of inquiry. But it is essentially inaccurate in that it ignores a fundamental factor common alike to research with the microscope or the blow-pipe and research with the written word or philosophic logic as its instrument. That factor is the *record* of what has been known and spread abroad by previous inquirers. The processes of human inquiry depend fundamentally on memory—and in the case of the pursuit of knowledge in our own day on the *record in print* of what the race has done or thought or attempted. It makes little difference whether the inquiry be into the morphology of the early Italic dialects of the Latin tongue, or into the function of the ductless glands of guinea pigs—the essential processes are alike these: observation and the gathering of data by experiment or by compilation; a study of the previous work done in the same field with a critical examination both of processes and results; a synthesis

from one's own observations and from the recorded observation of others; and finally such reflection (or theorizing) on the results as may lead to correlation of this piece of investigation with the sum of human knowledge, perhaps (occasionally) in a way to affect human activity. The so-called "book sciences" employ methods in no way essentially different from those long approved in the so-called "natural sciences." All of them alike depend on careful study of previous work as an initial step and on the publication of results as a final process. No facile popular division can separate "book-knowledge" from "experimental research." Experiment without "book-knowledge" is generally not research in the true sense, even though it occasionally leads an Edison into discoveries of untold value to the world.

There is, notwithstanding, a justification for this distinction popular among college students. The manner of teaching the natural sciences has been completely revolutionized in the last forty years. Every one knows that subjects formerly taught from text-books are now taught chiefly in laboratories. Emphasis is now laid on accurate observation, correct inference from observation, ability to report the sum of observation succinctly and truthfully. An equipment elaborate in itself, impressive in amount and cost, is properly thought needful to the task of teaching the natural sciences. Each student is considered

(I suppose) an embryo Pasteur or Rowland, and is laboriously inducted into scientific methods by requiring him to develop manual dexterity in the use of instruments, and training him to produce neat and correct note-books. Naturally the mass of students is found in the elementary courses. It is only the smaller number resulting from a process of natural (or at least academic) selection which ever gets to the "journal club" stage, and becomes personally aware of the existence of the enormous and multifarious record of scientific knowledge. That the method of teaching should of itself influence the students' conception of the subject-matter of instruction is both natural and inevitable. That undue weight should be given by their elders to manner and form of presentation is quite another matter. It is, however, impossible to escape the conclusion that many a scientist thinks that he is freed by the very nature of his work from a supposed taint of bookishness. He gives thanks that he is not as other men, as these historians and philologians—or even this librarian.

There is a real danger lurking in this attitude; and we are not without evidence that (whether from this source or more subtle workings of the laws of auto-suggestion) this tendency to pride himself on being strictly a scientific and not a book man has bred a habitual attitude of neglect of the record side of scientific inquiry which has already been disastrous

in too many instances. The conviction that apparatus and laboratories are essential—a perfectly sound and indeed a fundamental thesis—has somehow led to the notion that they and they alone constitute the requirements not only of instruction, but of research as well. This tendency—and I do not exaggerate it in the least—has made too many folk unmindful of the long history of science, has bred an attitude which can best be described as almost wholly lacking in the historic sense. And without a sense of the historic setting of his work, a man is almost as hopeless as is the man who lacks a sense of humor! You can not argue with one or the other! In fact I dare go farther and affirm that only by the combination of the historical and the experimental methods can any work of first-rate importance be produced in any field of knowledge.

By this time, I fear you may be saying to yourselves that whatever the platitude of research may mean as applied to bibliography the bibliographer is in truth indulging in platitudes! No one need set up a man of straw for the pleasure of knocking him over. There is no point to my contention, if it be true that students of the natural sciences in America have rigorously employed both the historical and the experimental method. The great leaders have unquestionably done just that. But how many *great* leaders have we produced in America? May not one

reason for our surpassing excellence in the practical arts and our rather scant array of great names in pure science lie exactly in the absence of the historical record of science from American institutions in the past century? It is difficult, perhaps one may say it is impossible, to get a correct historical perspective without a really good and strong library to furnish the means of study. No amount of second-hand information will ever take the place, for the real student, of the original documents. This is just as true in the pure and applied sciences as it is in history, economics or letters. Imagine an astronomer trying to carry on intelligent research in the observational field alone, without the great publications of the nineteenth century at his hand for previous study and occasional consultation. Yet that is precisely what scores of astronomers have done in this land, and are doing to-day. The example might be multiplied tenfold. Really good libraries of scientific books are scarce enough in America to-day. Before 1870 they did not exist, save perhaps at Harvard, and at the Astor Library in New York. No one of them is yet fully equipped to meet all the reasonable demands of scientists for a record of the progress of knowledge. I say this from my own experience. For eight years I labored—too often in vain—to serve the scientists in the various bureaus in Washington with books they needed. My work was in the third largest library

in the world. This fact is significant. May I enlarge upon it?

America is not a nation alone—it is continent. Distances are enormous. Because Mr. Henry E. Huntington has in San Gabriel in California a very rare early English book on American fishes or plants, it does not follow that it is of much use to a Harvard student who requires the exact language of the original description of a particular species. The extraordinary collection of early botanical works in the library of Notre Dame University is not easily helpful to the botanists of the Bureau of Plant Industry. These are but two concrete examples of the physical size of this land. You know what it means to journey to Washington in the hot weather of summer—yet you must perforce make the trip in vacation to consult some volume found in America only in the Library of Congress and too rare or too fragile to permit its loan. The situation is quite different in Europe. No university in the British Isles is as far from the British Museum as Ann Arbor is from New York or Washington. Even from Aberystwyth or remoter Aberdeen the trip is less in time consumed than from here to Albany. No French university professor is so far in time from the Bibliothèque Nationale as we from our national library, and we (be it remembered) are much nearer than our colleagues to the west and south. In Germany the Prussian State Library and in Aus-

tria the great libraries at Vienna are relatively near the universities. If one goes to London, it is but eight hours to Paris. Between the two largest libraries in the world a scholar can usually find *all* he needs in the way of books. I need not point out the contrast in this country and in Canada. These distances from great library centers have not been without influence on American scholarship.

In fact we may safely say that up to about 1900 there were very few strong scientific libraries in America, libraries in which the record of science could be traced with precision. There has been an almost startling change since the opening of this century. We have much yet to do. We can overcome the obstacles of distance and youth only by further heroic efforts. But we have most surely made progress. We have now a round dozen libraries really strong from an absolute standard. And they are growing stronger every day. We have many special libraries in various fields of science which have been highly developed in their own line—of these the most conspicuous is probably the great medical library of the Surgeon General's Office in Washington. We have developed library technique and library service far beyond European practice. But we have not developed to the point where the historic sense is necessarily fostered and the historic instinct adequately satisfied. That will come with time. Meantime we

may perhaps expect that instruction will take cognizance of this changed situation and will by its pressure aid to improve further the resources in the way of books.

For, of course, instruction in historic method and in the use of books as tools is utterly impossible without really good libraries. It is folly to expect students—even advanced students of high promise—to acquire a proper attitude toward their predecessors and their contemporaries without the publications of both at hand in full numbers. It is useless—or nearly so—to teach exact methods of ascertaining the present state of knowledge about any particular problem, when you know it is being worked on in New Zealand and South Africa—and your library lacks the New Zealand and South African transactions and journals. I need not dwell on this painful fact. You know more about it than I do. I suggest, therefore, that the production of truly strong men in your various lines of study depends to a very considerable degree on a sufficient provision of books in our libraries here on this campus. That provision depends on many factors—of which money is by no means the only one, as I hope to show you in the course of these remarks.

For the publication of the results of observation in the field of science has taken many (and frequently strange) forms. We ordinarily think of books as

just books—perhaps unconsciously influenced by the manufacture or the perusal of text-books. Ordinary monographs of the text-book type do, it is true, make the staple contents of book-sellers' stocks and ordinary library shelves. But they are perhaps the least important element in the complicated record of science. They are too generally compilations—not the results of original research. And their tendency to accumulate on those very shelves has perhaps had no small part in that neglect of the historic aspect of scientific inquiry to which allusion has just been made. The large and imposing monograph is the exception. True, it generally remains valuable and "well-spoken-of" long after the smaller books have passed to the limbo of things with a "merely historical" interest. Moreover, the huge monographs which have appeared in some scientific fields—such things as Audubon's *Birds of North America*, for example, or the monumental publications of von Humboldt—have been so costly that save to a favored few they have been merely names and names alone. I am inclined to consider this costliness in relation to our American libraries (until a recent date) a very real factor in the neglect of the older literature. It has simply cost too much to be known by the average student.

Perhaps the most extremely particularized form of monograph is the doctoral thesis. Most folk

whom I have met have lost interest in theses within a few years after their own have been promptly forgotten by their colleagues. It is hard to get any money for a lot of dissertations—particularly for the thin German products. The more extended French dissertations usually masquerade as real books. But historically theses for the doctorate have a great value—particularly those printed before 1800. Few people recall the pleasing habit of the earlier centuries which pratically compelled the candidate *respondens* to pay for the publication of the work of his *præses* under the guise of a doctoral disseration. A few years since a committee on botanical nomenclature—or rather, members of it resident in Washington—began to torment me for the disserations of the pupils of Linnæus, which, they averred, contained some of the great master's best work. It was an interesting quest which became exciting when I discovered a bundle of these much desired little Upsala dissertations carefully tied up and labeled among a group of several thousand Smithsonian exchanges from Sweden. By the liberal use of the photostat, reproducing copies from the Harvard Library and the Torrey Botanical Club, the series was made, I believe, complete, and the committee supplied with those original descriptions so essential in determining nomenclature.

One of the extremely important groups which has

been too often denied our budding scientists is that formed by the publications of museums the world over. The catalogs and series, the monographs and bulletins published by important museums are in a very real sense the foundation stones in many branches of science. And it is not only the great museums such as the British Museum, the Berlin group, the National Museum at Washington, the Peabody Museum at Cambridge, which have issued vitally important publications. The local and the special museums have issued publications both serial and monographic which become of vital importance the minute a piece of work done here demands them. You can never foretell when one of these will seem to some professor exactly the one book in the world whose absence from our shelves is fairly blocking his studies. He could not tell you himself a week before his need suddenly arises that he would ever care for such a report or catalog. But he can make his wants known without any difficulty when the demand comes, I assure you. What has seemed a fairly good library up to this morning instantly changes to a very mediocre establishment in the afternoon after a consultation of the catalog! It is a great pleasure to be able to report to you that for five years past the income of the Octavia Bates Bequest has been chiefly devoted to the purchase of museum publications, beginning with those of the British Museum. We could use a permanent fund

twice as large to very good purpose in supplementing this work, which up to this time has only begun.

Museum publications are generally issued in limited numbers and at high prices. It is a serious task to secure them. But it is easy compared to the job of getting the publications of expeditions. There is a peculiar fate which attaches to the printing and editing of the scientific results of expeditions of all sorts. Usually some member publishes a popular narrative which frequently sells rather well, particularly if any notoriety or celebrity attaches to the expedition. This very quickly gets into the libraries, as witness the host of popular accounts of polar expeditions which you doubtless all know by name. Far different is the fate of the publication of the scientific results. They are inevitably the work of different men. The labor of preparation requires vastly more time for some subjects than for others. Parts of volumes appear from time to time—members of the expedition go off on other expeditions with their first work half-done or half-published. Editors change, or die. A fire in a store-room or a residence destroys another's notes—or even the specimens themselves. Years pass and the expedition's publications are still unfinished—perhaps they are never finished. Volumes remain unbound because of a missing part never issued, but still hoped for. Publishers fail and the stock is sold for paper. Govern-

ments grow weary and withdraw subventions—then vote them again. Heaven blesses a few scientific expeditions with capable members, vigilant editors, a government's purse and completion of publication within a few years. But they are few. I could tell you tale after tale of heart-breaking delays, inconsistencies, changes of forms, failures, deaths—and all involving untold trouble for the librarian who must first *get* these things and then take care of them. Altogether a difficult and perhaps a useless job, you might say.

But then—remember the momentous results of some expeditions and voyages;—yes even of some which have never been completely published! One need only recall a few names, La Perouse, The Challenger, the Beagle,—need we go on? Take but one example—the Wilkes Exploring Expedition. You recall its history, the famous controversy over the Antarctic Continent, the numerous narratives, the slow appearance of the stately folios containing the scientific results. This was the first scientific publication on a large scale of the government of these United States, and an entire evening could be spent in a most interesting way in detailing its vicissitudes. I need mention only one volume to show its importance—Dana's great work on the Zoophytes, a book so important that seventy years after its appearance it is still regarded as fundamental. But how few libraries

own a copy of the original text and plates! Printed in only 200 copies, never sold, distributed solely by resolution of Congress, what chance has there been for the newer libraries to secure a copy for their clientèle? To be sure, not all expeditions encounter such a series of accidents in publication as this of Wilkes—but as a class they present a most difficult problem. They are alike hard to get when issued, slow to appear, slower to be finished, costly and even (occasionally) not sold at all, but only given to a select few. Later, years later, the task is much harder. If I were given a round sum and told to get in three years all the important scientific expedition publications of the past hundred years—I should decline to promise success in that time—perhaps even in five years. But I can think of but few efforts so well worth attempting.

If expeditions present difficulties alike to the librarian and the scientist, what shall we say of international congresses? That they mark the progress of research in many lines is a truism. They are absolutely needed—but they too are very hard to get. In the first place, there is no good list of them—even the brief list issued about a year ago is most incomplete. Then, the congresses seldom have permanent offices and officers. They are held at irregular intervals, generally in a different place each time they meet. If one attends, he generally gets the proceed-

ings. But very seldom does any library get a notice of the meeting in advance. Usually the papers and proceedings are published in the place where the congress meets—at Madrid one year, three years later at Washington or Moscow or Stockholm, or where you please. The publisher of course varies with each move of the congress. An attempt to place an order for subsequent issues usually fails of execution. Three or five years is a long time for any secretary to carry an order. So if some professor from Michigan goes to the geological congress at Brussels this summer, we *may* get on the mailing list—but otherwise we probably shall not—despite our efforts. The difficulty is vastly increased by the habit of European governments of giving subventions to private publishers to aid in printing reports of congresses instead of issuing them through the governmental printing office. So they may appear in the publisher's list as his own publications—or they may never be listed anywhere. It can not be denied that the hunting down of international congresses adds zest to the librarian's life—but when you are held accountable by science for the results of your hunting it ceases to be sport. Then, too, local societies and savants have a pleasing habit of offering volumes to the congress as a sort of testimony alike of their interest and of their own activities. These are almost never to be confused with the Report of the Congress itself—

except in the minds of booksellers who manage to introduce no end of confusion into orders as a consequence. You may imagine, therefore, that international congresses are a bug-bear to library folk—a sore topic. You may also imagine my own delight in securing over one hundred and fifty reports of various international congresses on my book-buying trip last fall. Few acquisitions have given me more solid satisfaction. And yet, I suppose I have simply created more trouble for myself—every department will now demand that these reports be made absolutely complete! In the language of the street, "I can see *my* finish!" Partial success always brings its own penalty.

Who originated the idea of the "Academy"? Whoever he was, whether Plato in the groves of Academe, or some Renaissance imitator, or even the gentleman who conceived the Royal Society, he let loose on mankind an institution making for publication—if we appraise it in no higher terms. And particularly in the nineteenth century did the academy flourish in print. Here again Europe has an advantage over America, and advantage more of age than of enterprise, of geographical smallness as contrasted with continental sweep and range. Most scientists in Europe have easy access to files of academic publications, files which have been slowly accumulated with the passing years. Here we have had to work hard

in the past two decades to establish half a dozen centers in which fairly complete series may be found, a process still going on and proving increasingly costly each year. But we must continue and complete it. The interests of American scholarship simply require it of us. The greater academies are now well represented at Michigan, with here and there a gap, it is true, but still with full ranks for the most part. What to do about the minor academies and societies from the whole world? That is a vexing question to which I may refer again in a few moments. I pause merely to remark that a minor academy is minor only so long as you do not want its transactions in your own work.

And last in this array of forms of scientific publication comes the largest group of all, newest and most insistently demanded, the journals. To me the rise of the special periodical devoted to the interest of a special group is one of the most significant social phenomena of the past fifty years. Let no one here think that this tendency to periodical publication is confined to science or to the more learned groups. By no means—the brick-layer, the barber, the banker, the baker, the builder, the book-binder (to keep to one letter only) all have their journals fully as much as the biologist, the botanist, the biochemist, or even the bibliographer. And they all have to be ordered, entered, paid for, cataloged, bound, and stored.

Periodical publication is the one modern form for telling the world what everybody has done and what other people think about it. We take in over twenty-eight hundred journals in the University Library. A goodly number—do you say? Well, it is just about half what other libraries of our size subscribe for, and about a quarter of what the Library of Congress receives each year. Perhaps the medical faculty is satisfied with its four hundred and sixty-six journals received. But I fear no other group really has enough. Certainly that great department loosely known as the social sciences does not have at hand here anything like an adequate supply. I see no end to this modern form of publication. Every quarter I read with sadly disappointed hope the record of "Births and Deaths in the Periodical World" appearing in the *Bulletin of Bibliography*. The births always outnumber the deaths and the marriages of journals. My one consolation is my firm conviction that wood-pulp paper has a very definite limit of stability. But then I reflect that some chemist is sure to discover some process of preserving this wood-pulp mass for an indefinite period. There is no way out. Journals and transactions, reviews and proceedings we have ever with us in ever increasing numbers. These the investigator simply must have. Can he have them all at hand currently and in bound form? Obviously not, unless we multiply our library

budgets about ten-fold, and our storage quarters five-fold.

This leads us very naturally to consider this problem of supplying the full record of science to our men of science. It is not a local problem merely. It is also a national problem. The difficulties in the way are partly those of finance, partly those of time, partly competition, not alone among American libraries, but with those of Japan and China, of South America and South Africa, of New Zealand and Australia. Very much of the material required by this group before me was published in but a small edition, running from a couple of hundred in the case of certain very costly books, to a thousand or more for certain journals. In their beginnings journals and transactions are frequently issued in only sufficient numbers to meet the actual number of subscribers. You all know how the wastebasket yawns for odd numbers, and what chances of destruction stray copies must run between careless or absent-minded owners, house-maids, janitors, the frugal house-wife and the rag-man. Wars and disasters intervene to reduce the numbers of copies in existence. I have no hesitation in saying that the possibility of securing sets of certain very much valued books and journals is diminishing even to the vanishing point with each year that goes by. The world war was destructive of reserves, caused restriction in the number of copies

printed, and increased enormously the cost of printed matter of all sorts. In some cases known to me no copies were printed beyond the actual home demand, totally ignoring foreign or enemy subscribers. I know of one American journal which actually printed last December one hundred and fifty copies less than its regular subscription list, because paper took a sudden jump in price and only the stock on hand was used. This sort of thing makes the task of securing sets anything but easy. The chief source of supply is the libraries of deceased professors as they come on the market—and professors who own and bind long files of journals and transactions are becoming rarer with the high cost of living and the decreasing amount of shelf space in modern houses and apartments. The necessity of quick action can not be stressed unduly in view of the present circumstances. It is not a question any longer of waiting for a favorable opportunity. Rather are we faced with the necessity of getting what we need whenever the chance comes up. The competition from the newer countries and the newer libraries is keener every year. Thirty years ago there was no large scientific library west of us—not one. Now we may mention the Universities of Chicago, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, California, Leland Stanford, Washington, and the John Crerar Library, without even exhausting the list of institutions of the first rank—

for special libraries in a small field are equally dangerous competitors for the valuable books and sets in their own line. In those same thirty years South America, South Africa, Japan, Australia, and Canada have come into the field eager to provide their scientists with the record of science. McGill University bought just before me last fall very many sets of journals long on our list of desiderata. I found Japanese buyers had been everywhere with the government purse to draw on. The fact is that we must both hasten our own purchases and combine with our neighbors if American learning is to be kept on an equality with that of Europe.

The need of coöperation and of a policy looking to the elimination of certain forms of competition is brought home to me more keenly each year. We should be able, it would seem, to agree on certain fields which we can cultivate intensively, securing everything of moment in them, as far as we can raise the funds. Certain general works, general society transactions, journals of a wide appeal we must *all* have. But must we—take a concrete case—*all* try to buy the publications of the smaller and less important societies? May not half a dozen sets spread over the country suffice with the development of the interlibrary loan and of photo-duplicating machines? Can we not agree with Chicago, Urbana, Cleveland, Columbus, Pittsburgh, and Ithaca on a limit in

purchasing such local society publications? Thus we might *all* save money, keep down prices, gain in the total number of sets available, and lend freely between ourselves. This matter seems to me highly important—even vital to our success. It has been much discussed among librarians. There would be small difficulty in arriving at a policy, if it were a matter to be decided by librarians alone. But it concerns far more deeply the faculties of the various universities and their governing boards. We librarians can not, for example, get together and agree on a limitation of our several fields of specialization. We must first gain adherents to a policy of limitation, then form an agreement through some joint committee of professors, and finally secure the consent of boards of regents and trustees. The facts are most clear and patent. We simply can not all have everything. There isn't enough to go 'round, nor money enough to buy everything. What we must do, then, in common sense is to stop trying to get everything in each library, and go for the things we can reasonably expect to secure in coöperation with our neighbors. If any one doubts the success of this plan, I refer him to the results of the agreement between the Chicago libraries made in 1895 and carried out since to the lasting benefit of scholarship. There is every reason why we should enter into a similar pact with neighboring libraries.

For what is our position now? We have no near neighbors among universities. We stand half-way between Cornell and Buffalo on the east and Chicago and Northwestern on the west. Western Reserve, Ohio State and Oberlin to the south are in a manner comparable with our collections—but as yet hardly formidable rivals. There is practically nothing north of us—(Remember that I am speaking now of libraries whose chief interest is the furthering of scholarship). We have two large public libraries fairly near—Detroit and Cleveland, both owning certain valuable special collections, and both likely to specialize in technology and in the applied sciences. There are a few specialized libraries of distinction, such as that of the Western Reserve Historical Society at Cleveland, which owns what is probably the best collection on our Civil War in existence. We may safely say, then, that we have fewer neighbors on whose aid we may rely than have the eastern universities or those in the northern Mississippi Valley. But there is no reason that I can see why we should attempt to duplicate and surpass, for example, the White Collection of Folk-lore in the Cleveland Public Library, or the Burton Collection of local history and genealogy in the Detroit Public Library. Nor should we fail to agree with the Chicago libraries and those of Ohio (and even perhaps of western New York and Ontario) as to certain fields

of learning which they will leave to us, and others in which we shall not aim at more than general works. I should like to see the Association of University Professors, or some other body representing various universities, take up this problem in a practical fashion. The inter-library loan and the photostat put the resources of each library at the disposal of its neighbors. Why neglect so obvious a step as conference and agreement on subjects of specialization? But, of course, when it comes to self-denying ordinances, only the men concerned may pass them. It is not for me to say what any group of professors shall forego. It is "up to" them in the interest of science as a whole and of its progress in our land. I can merely point out one very obvious step to be taken—and perhaps push a little towards that step.

Our present situation here at Michigan is better than it was, but it is far from satisfactory. We have a goodly list, for example, of journals and society transactions—but we have far too many gaps in the sets, gaps that are very hard to fill. We have a fair lot of expedition publications—likewise badly defective. We have a few of the great monumental publications, and very incompete sets of congresses and museum publications. I have already indicated that our collections of monographs are reasonably large. But we are distinctly worse off in the pure sciences and the applied sciences than we are in

literature or American history. We are far worse off as regards economics or philosophy than in scientific fields. We have a faculty and a student body probably third in size in America. But the library ranks about eighth among universities in number of volumes. We have, therefore, very much to add before our book collections correspond to our size in students and faculties. Harvard, for instance, has more than four times as many books as we have, Yale three times as many, and Columbia and Chicago about twice our holdings. This is a situation not to be remedied in a day—even were adequate funds in hand, as I have tried to show. All the more reason, therefore, why we should think clearly and plan wisely, and should coöperate with our neighbors.

The country as a whole is in about the same relative state as regards the record of scientific work the world over as is the University of Michigan. That is to say, by diligent effort we can find the obscure and the rare, and without too much trouble can secure the obvious and ordinary run of books. But taken as a whole, the country is decidedly worse off than most European lands. Our scientists are at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to books as compared with those of Great Britain, France or Germany, or even Italy. We can only overcome this handicap—which is very real—by the most careful bibliographic work and by lending freely.

This brings me to that aspect of our topic which was probably most in my friend's mind when he spoke so disparagingly of bibliography. Most people ignore the practical and administrative side of the bibliographer's labors. They think of him merely as one who records what other men have done and said. That he is also the gatherer of material, and to a large extent its interpreter they forget. But the major function of the scientific bibliographer is that of indexing the record of science, after he has got it together. This is a highly technical job and has been very well done in certain fields, and very poorly done in others. Perhaps medicine has the best indexes. The great catalog of the library of the Surgeon-General's Office in Washington forms one of the most remarkable pieces of index work ever attempted. The *Index Medicus* is a wonderful clue to the currently appearing work of the world of medicine. Both have proven frightfully expensive. Both are due to the energy of one man, John Shaw Billings, and the extraordinary skill and devoted patience of his associate and biographer, Fielding H. Garrison. Neither has ever paid expenses and both have had a hard struggle to survive, despite government aid and the purse of great foundations. Even now we are threatened with a curtailment, if not the ending, of the catalog. Such books are very costly, but without them, science must perforce halt its progress.

The pure sciences have had no such American record as these two in medicine. The Royal Society's *Catalogue of Scientific Papers*, appearing years after their publication, is the most conspicuous British effort. And then, after years of incubation, came the great international undertaking known as the *International Catalog of Scientific Literature*, bearing the Royal Society's imprint and prepared by regional bureaus under an international council. This was to begin with the twentieth century and to be the final word in all branches of pure science. Now unhappily the world war has brought it to a standstill, probably to an end. But it was already breaking down of its own weight before the war. The plain speaking of the few librarians who were given any chance to be heard between 1895 and 1900 was utterly disregarded. They insisted, if I remember correctly, that without some provision for cumulation of entries at intervals of about five years the scheme would defeat its own ends. And their prophecy was amply justified before the war brought a halt to the already huge series of annual volumes. The set remains a monument to the difficulties of the task of an adequate index to the published work of scientists.

A few attempts at overcoming this difficulty by card bibliographies have been made. Of these the most conspicuous is the work of the Concilium Bibliographicum in the field of zoology, paleontology

and anatomy—an undertaking which is likewise due to an American, the late H. H. Field. This is, as you doubtless know, a classified bibliography printed on cards, arranged in very minute sub-divisions of the decimal classification. When you once learn how to use it, it is most valuable. It usually takes us about a year to train a girl to file the cards, and how long it may take a zoologist or an anatomist to learn how to use them to full advantage, I can not say. This bibliography was also stopped by the war, but will soon be resumed with money supplied by the Rockefeller Foundation. I know of no other current card subject bibliography on a similar scale.

The tendency has been, on the whole, to develop special annual reviews in rather minute sub-divisions of the general field. Of these by far the most conspicuous have been the *Jahresberichte* appearing in Germany. There was formerly no end to these special bibliographies—often accompanied by critical notes on the scope or value of the works listed. They, too, were mosty stopped or curtailed by the war, and various efforts have been made to revive them or produce new ones. You each know your own favorite bibliographical review—but do you know the difficulties under which they have labored and which are well-nigh fatal at the present day? The chaotic condition of the world from an economic or political viewpoint is well matched as regards the record of

science. Publication of results is still slow and defective—indexing of publications is more so. The obligation rests on America to provide both the means of publication and the proper clue to recorded work. I can hardly stress this too strongly, as I necessarily am forced to take a broad and general view of the whole situation. If the needed indexing of scientific (and indeed all learned) literature is to be done at all—it must be financed in this country. I can think of nothing more important for the attention of the American Association or the Advancement of Science than this very problem of adequate successors to those special and general indexes which have been so useful and which are now either suspended or definitely dead.

* * *

May I, as a layman, venture a suggestion to you who are experts? I feel that most of you tend to ignore in the organization of your work of instruction any presentation of two things which help to mark a scientist of real distinction. The first of these is a knowledge of how to use to the full the various bibliographic tools provided. It seems to me that such instructon in their use is a real necessity—perhaps not for elementary classes, but certainly for any study of an advanced character. The loss which comes from an ignorance of what has been done on any given

problem is pathetic—loss of time, unnecessary labor, discouragement. It is a loss which can be avoided by very simple means. The gain which comes with full knowledge of previously published results is uncounted. It marks the successful from the halting start on any task. The complexity of the bibliographic indexing in most fields is so great that there is real need for formal instruction in handling bibliographic tools. No one of you ignores instruction in laboratory method. Should he overlook the need of instruction in bibliographic method? The second of my two marks of distinction is a broad, general view of the history, methods and scope of his subject, what in my youth the Germans used to call "Encyclopaedie." Few men are willing to take the time from their own particular researches to lecture on a general introduction to their subjects. But I venture to point out that precisely such a broad, sweeping view of the whole topic is what the younger men need most. It can be given only by one whose reading has been wide, whose grasp of the whole subject is firm, whose judgment is matured, and whose experience entitles him to speak with authority. What in a master makes disciples? What qualities in some men enable them to found a real school? Is it not precisely that grasp of method, that sense of relations of parts to the whole, that historic view and that prophetic insight which comes from a deliberate

attempt to survey the whole of one's subject, to weigh its importance, to contemplate not alone its past but its present and future? My suggestion is that students should not be left to pick up either bibliograhic method or a general view of their subject from incidental allusion or chance comment. The need of both is too great and too serious to warrant the indifference or neglect which they now seem to encounter.

To sum up, then, this attempt at some reflection on the record of scientific inquiry, particularly as it concerns us at the present hour and in this university: We have made a fair beginning at providing our men and women with the printed record of the more immediate past. We have at least the rudiments of a good collection of the important work of the remoter periods. We know rather precisely the direction which our efforts in buying should take, and more than a little as to the difficulties in our path. We are ready to do our part (I take it) in any coöperative scheme for furnishing to this Great Lakes region a fuller measure of books and journals. We know the imperfections of our bibliographic tools. (We have most of them in constant use!) And we stand ready to contribute in this field also our own share of cooperative labor. In other words—we know our defects and we are trying to overcome them, and all we need is time and money—and perhaps wisdom!

What of the future? What may we hope for in twenty years, supposing no great disaster checks our labors?

We may, I believe, expect to find here (available to a large region) the major academic and society publications in absolute completeness. We may further expect at least double the present amount of journals, both current numbers and bound files. We shall be part of a regional group of libraries, owning our share of the minor society publications and journals, with a fairly complete whole ready for rapid use, distributed by air-mail in response to wireless telephone requests, every few hours. It ought not to take a man here in 1930 any longer to get a book from Columbus or Chicago than it now takes him in many European libraries—that is, six to twenty-four hours. We shall have a complete printed list, kept up to date, of all the periodicals and transactions (and perhaps all the books) available both in the libraries of our region and the whole United States. (This is almost in sight now! With two hundred thousand dollars it could be done in two years' time!) We should have also a bibliographic equipment which will furnish with the minimum of effort a practically complete list of all articles and books on any topic, arranged in inverse chronological order, the latest to appear coming first. This is solely a matter of organization and money. It represents merely the

marshalling of a sufficient number of trained people to supplement work already begun on methods already worked out. It means applying the method of storing linotype bars and using them as needed, for example, in the cumulation decade by decade of the Royal Society's International Catalog. This work could be organized for the future in three years and printing of the first two decades of the twentieth century finished in five or less. I am less sure that it will come than I am confident of the future provision in the way of books. But if and when the key to the record does exist, then no budding scientist may fail of confidence in his start, of the help in his labors as they go on year by year which comes from knowing what has been done and what is being done by his fellows. We shall have then ready at hand—not alone the record in print of human efforts to comprehend the universe, but also such an effective and useful key to that record that we may reverse the old saying, and affirm he who reads may run.

FASHIONS IN BOOKS[1,2]

We have all of us, I suppose, suffered full many a time and oft from the habit which seems inbred in lecturers of beginning as near the Creation as their theme permits, and slowly—so slowly—working down to the present age and the actual subject of discussion. I have always sympathized with Mr. Justice Bradley, of the Supreme Court of the United States, who once interrupted a prosy digger-up of past ages of the law with the remark "Sunday was declared a *dies-non* in 325 A. D. Suppose you begin there and come down to the present day!" So I shall not seek today to delve into the immemorial past, nor shall I attempt to trace the vast history of fashions nor illustrate at length their relation to tribal taboos or their natural growth from primitive man's environment. Such philosophic—though attractive—phases of my topic shall not beguile me from those bookish paths supposed to be trod with propriety and decorum by the speaker on this occasion.

But a few reflections on fashion—the mode—cannot be avoided if we are to consider fashions in the

[1] May Day address at the Wisconsin Library School, 1922.
[2] *Wisconsin Library Bulletin*, June, 1922.

world of letters. It has been well said that the tyranny of fashion holds us all in an unshakable grip. We can rise above the current *mores* and the rigid laws of convention and style only by a supreme effort. The average male of the species is apt to expatiate on the follies of the female in slavish devotion to the passing mode, particularly in dress—whereas she is a reasonably free and unfettered being compared to him. If I should have appeared here today in the flannel-shirted costume most conducive to comfort and ease alike of speech and movement, I doubt very much whether I should have been allowed to get past the door, and I can picture my hostess's horror and dismay at my ill-bred failure to dress in a manner worthy of the occasion. A band of linen more or less stiffly starched embraces the neck of each man here. He wears most uncomfortable trousers which must be creased if he be admitted to polite society: (In my boyhood they must *not* be creased!) He has—with a struggle of two full decades—emancipated himself from a long and stiff shirt-bosom and stiffer cuffs of white, but he still wears the most conventionally shaped coat and waistcoat and shoes. He is essentially like every other man in his appearance, save for differences of color in his garb. And even here, his choice is limited by convention to neutral tones of grey, brown and blue, or to sombre black. The man

who, following his own ideas of color effects, should appear in a canary-yellow, a pink, or even a white, suit of clothes on this platform would be laughed to scorn and set down as a hopeless poseur. If he should even allow himself the luxury of white shoes in winter—or should dispense with that band of silk or satin labeled a neck-tie—he would be counted eccentric beyond words. We men may not indulge in flings at women as slaves to convention, who flit from fashion to fashion, who are its victims, its prey. Rather, I suppose, should we envy them the effective freedom which one year dispenses with high collars and bares the throat to the wintry breeze and the next summer swathes and conceals in furs the same shapely neck and shoulders.

And yet, the temptation is strong. What mere man has not regarded the "dear creatures" with amused tolerance at rather frequent intervals. I walked, on the day these lines were written, behind a group of four women students, on the Michigan Campus, and I surveyed their garb with amazement —with "hadmiration hamounting to hawe!" Now, no man can ever describe women's clothes—to the satisfaction of other women,—but there were certain features of the attire of this quartette—in no sense a conspicuous group, I hasten to say—which even a librarian who knows naught of feminine terms may venture to recall. Their hats were small—very

sensibly and fetchingly small, to the masculine eye. They all showed a very visible more or less permanent "wave." Each of them wore a short fur coat—each a different color—which reached nearly to the knee. Below this was a modest strip of skirt. Then silk hose—Oh, very much silk!—and then what in my youth were known as farmers' arctics—now termed "galoshes"—two pairs buckled—two flopping. The only things in common with the outward appearance of these misses and my own classmates of thirty years since were the notebooks and textbooks carried under the left arm. But I have no manner of doubt, from very vivid recollections, that the girls of 1892 who wore broad hats, tight bodices with large sleeves, full skirts which had to be held up at every crossing and mudpuddle, and who furtively sported rubber boots in very bad weather, were vivacious young women, keen, up-to-date, thoroughly alive, getting the most socially and intellectually out of their university career. But a visitor—not from Mars, necessarily—let us say from Central Africa where clothing of any sort is a most shadowy concession to convention—might well question, if he saw young women garbed in the two modes of but thirty years apart, whether they were of the same race, the same class, fired by the same purposes, and alike to prove good mothers, and good citizens. He would be wrong—there is no great

change under the shifting garb of conventional costume. Men are men, and women are women—and never the twain shall understand the other's ideas of fashion and of style.

And so the world of letters has had its changing fashions from the day when the convenient clay tablet replaced the more elderly fashion of carving on stone for ordinary use in ancient Babylon. I have no doubt there were objections to the innovation and bitter references to the "good old days" when solid comfort could be taken in the imperishable record on alabaster slab and marble stele. I shall not weary you with a catalog of the various fashions in writing materials and surfaces, with a dissertation on the stylus, the reed, the brush, the quill. Nor shall I trace the history of papyrus and parchment, of rolls and codices, of wax tablets and leaden discs. It is a fascinating topic, and had we time we might find interest even in the changing fashions of letters —in the disappearance of ancient forms and the development of new ones even in that single alphabet of Cadmus which has given letters to the Western world—yes, and to lands undreamed of by those Greeks whose alphabet underlies that of Europe and the two Americas. Manuscript books had their fashions of writing, of ornament and of form, styles so pronounced and so significant that even a tyro can, after a little practice, distinguish a Latin manu-

script written in Visigothic Spain from one written at about the same period either in Ireland or France or Italy. An expert can ordinarily fix the date with reasonable accuracy and point out the precise region in which a manuscript was written, though it bears no mark of time or place. A student of illumination can say with truth that a certain manuscript was written in France or Italy, though decorated by an English artist. He can, in other words, recognize the fashion of writing and of decorating prevailing in a certain age and in a certain region. It is hard to over-estimate the influence of the schoolmaster on writing. Such uniformity does it produce that any one of you can tell a letter written betwee 1840 and 1870 from one written before or since that date. And in dealing with books written by hand the conservative influence of fashion is even more pronounced and visible.

The early printers—as I had the privilege of showing in this place four years ago—entered into a competition with the scribes. They followed in type the fashion of writing of the time and place with great fidelity in an effort to get business. It was not until well into the sixteenth century that fashions in print began to depart from the styles of handwriting and to set up independent modes of their own. You can tell a book printed before 1500 in Germany or France or Italy at almost the first glance. A Spanish

incunabulum is no more like an English one than is a typical Spanish building of 1490 like an English structure of the same date. There are occasional exceptions which only tend to prove the rule of uniformity. Much of the study of early printing, then, is a study of fashions in type and in the shape of books. It can only be followed successfully by one who has made an extensive study of contemporary manuscripts. This is true of early book-illustration as well. One needs to know the history of the illumination of manuscript books, of engraving, and of painting to understand how the fashions in book illustration by means of woodcuts arose and changed.

There are certain physical characteristics of early printed books which are perfectly apparent to anyone who has handled and seen many of them. These are very hard to describe. There is no norm departure from which may offer a scale of exact measurement. Perhaps in these days when measurements and tests are being taken of everyone's ability to think, to repeat, to act, to dream, and so on, it is humiliating to confess our inability so to measure a book as to pronounce it at once the product of a certain press in a certain city on a certain date. Let us hope there are none of those new-fangled psychologists and educationists present to deride—or perhaps even to appraise—the speaker. But as one

knows his friends—even his mother—by manner and characteristics rather than by millimeters and coloric scales—so one knows books of the first fifty years of printing, books of the seventeenth century, early nineteenth century books, and so on. You can pick them out on a book-seller's or library's shelves from the common herd. The fashion may be hard to describe, the characteristics may be minute and almost intangible—but they are there, and one recognizes them. They may be concealed by new bindings, but even then they do not wholly escape notice. But in a contemporary dress books appear more nearly their own true selves. It is rare sport to hunt for incunabula, for books of the sixteenth century, for early English novels, for scientific journals by their outward shape and fashion. I have but lately returned from some three months of it, and I have been impressed anew by the fixity of book-fashions, by their definiteness of differentiation, by the fact that books can be so easily placed and named. I suppose I have recently seen the backs of at least two million books in scores of shops—and it was almost always possible to detect the early ones, those from the middle period, and those of more recent origin.

Every once in a while some one rises to decry the great variety of sizes in which books are printed. Generally such an one has an attractive scheme of

uniformity to urge—all books to be reduced to one—or at most to two—sizes. Familiar arguments as to convenience and ease of storage, reduction of costs, and so forth are brought out and aired. There is no answer to these arguments, any more than there is any answer to the plausible and wholly sensible plans to dress all women in uniform in the interest of those twin devils misnamed economy and efficiency. But I notice that the ladies—even the employees of certain great corporations—go on following the changing styles of dress—and the books continue to follow the fashion of the age in shape and size and outward appearance. Changes in presses have vastly more influence in changing the form of books than any notions of style or ideas of harmonious proportion. Before the application of steam to printing there was more variety, I think, than has been common since. But it is not true, as some mistakenly and carelessly affirm, that early books ran chiefly to folios, that the quarto was the prevailing seventeenth century form, and the pocket edition was a device of the nineteenth century. I have seen a small octavo printed by Gutenberg himself, small prayer books printed by the Giuntas in 1496, while it is notorious that the great Aldus first used his famous Italic type to produce pocket editions of the classics. And huge folios issue from the press today—less often, it is true, than in the

sixteenth century—but perhaps in greater numbers. The sizes of newspapers, to take a conspicuous example, have changed with the changing presses on which they have been printed. Fashion in book sizes, in book illustrations, in book bindings, have depended far more on mechanical processes of book making than on the decisions of authors and publishers. The change in the late nineteenth century from wood-engraving to photo-engraving (mostly a change for the worse) is a typical case in point.

If you wish a fascinating subject for a winter's study, let me urge you to follow the history of bookbinding—surely a study of fashion pure and simple. The simple elements involved in covering a book and then decorating the covers have lent themselves to an almost infinite variety of combinations. The materials are but few—leathers of various sorts and colors, pigments and gold for lettering and for designs, cloth and paper—but what a wealth of results! And how they group themselves into fashions of one or another age! The solid and plain vellum with lettering in India ink, a style surely born of monastic poverty and stern simplicity, gives way to stamped vellum bindings of intricate design and often of high artistic merit. Vellum yields to morocco with all the possibilities of color and pattern furnished by a more pliable material which can be dyed successfully. The graceful bands of the Grolieresque become the

intricate and elaborate inlays of the nineteenth century. Special tools and forms mark the individual binders of note, while all the devices of heraldry enter to render elaborate the marking of ownership. Cloth and paper come in with the fashion on the part of publishers of furnishing the book in bound form to buyers, and come in to add to the beauty and variety of design and pattern. One may follow the fashions of an age or a country, he may study on the one hand ordinary commercial binding, and on the other the individual work of great artists among bookbinders. There is almost no limit to the search for historic form and artistic creation. Fashions in bindings old and new form a welcome side-path which the librarian, weary of "catalog rules" and "reference" questions, may pursue for his own refreshment while he labors at his humdrum routine.

But all this, one may well say, is external, outward. The topic is fashions *in* books. And, of course, this is nothing less than literary history and criticism. Quite so, but the librarian pursues such a study from a point of view somewhat different from that of the university professor or the man of letters. He is forced to be more catholic in his standpoint—more universal in his acceptances. To him the world of letters does not mean *belles-lettres* simply—rather it connotes print—all print that

men have used and have preserved. He does not unduly exalt the trivial and inconsequential. But as he has to take care of masses of books and pamphlets both trivial and inconsequential when seen from any other than an historic point of view, he cannot exercise a merely selective judgment, ignoring the mass to single out a few choice products. Indeed his viewpoint is necessarily affected by the mass—as is the bookseller's. Said a very wise bookseller to me on one occasion, "One pamphlet, such as this on the cholera printed in 1728, is worth nothing—not a penny. But a collection of over eight hundred pamphlets on cholera printed between 1700 and 1900 is a *Bibliotheca Cholerica*. It has immense value in cash and in fact." So in surveying book fashions, literary styles and modes, the librarian cannot confine himself solely to the great exemplars of those changing ideals of the centuries. He must perforce see also the larger numbers, must reckon not alone with Shakespeare and the great Elizabethans, but with the lesser lights of that time, and of less glorious days. (Indeed it is probably a wise precaution for him to devote himself to some one man or one phase of a fashion just because he sees so much of the other men and the other fashions). He views book fashions, literary conventions, changing modes of expression, with both more sympathy and with less impatience than his critical friends,

who constantly add to the somewhat muddy stream of books about books. He is likely to have a wider—if perchance a shallower—knowledge, to think in terms of thousands of volumes, even perhaps in terms of readers, who are generally ignored entirely by the historian of literature. His viewpoint is perhaps more philosophical, more historical, his enthusiasms and his dislikes less intense and personal. He *has* to take care of (and even to promote the circulation of) many books which he knows to be the product of mediocre minds—fitted perhaps to current fashions, or even to fashions long dead. Like Solomon in Jim's phrase from the immortal pages of *Huckleberry Finn* he is inclined at times "to be waseful of chillen. Dey's plenty mo'." And so let us glance at just a few fashions in the long history of books.

I have often wished someone would write a real history of the most unreal fashion in letters known to me—the so-called pastoral poetry. Was there ever another such case of the survival of a literary form due to the influence of one or two great names? Perhaps there may have been shepherds in that pleasant land of Greater Greece where Theocritus watched the burning sun of summer disappear in glowing haze behind the Sicilian hills, shepherds who sang simple songs of their loves and jealousies, of nymphs and fauns, of their goats and kids. But

once the literary tradition was set by genius, what a deluge of purely fictitious, unspontaneous, wholly artificial poems overwhelmed mankind! Not Vergil's sonorous eclogues, nor Milton's *Lycidas* can redeem the pastoral form with its flocks, its swains, its shepherds and goat herds, its lambs and kids, its shepherdesses and nymphs, its fauns and dryads. Through Latin to Italian, through Spanish, French and English, even in the guttural strains of German and Dutch the pastoral pipes, the love-lorn swains and their thin ditties resound for the ears of those who claim at least a tincture, a tinge of humane letters. And how little genuine poetry there is in the whole lot! Happily form classification has almost disappeared from our libraries, otherwise what a showing there would be of inane talk and feeble imitation masquerading as pastoral poetry. One occasionally hears some professor of literature say the pastoral as a form is dead. I wonder. No librarian, at least, would venture such a statement, which is really a prophecy. That no future age will revert to Amyntas and Tityrus, to Chloe and Silvia, to pipes and goats and nymphs, is a rash prediction, born, I fear, of hope rather than of judgment.

As safely might one say that the epic poem is dead—perhaps more safely, since epics seem to spring mainly from the primitive experiences of a

race. But surveying the catastrophic events of the past decade, sensing even vaguely the portentous future struggles of races under the terrible conditions of modern warfare, who shall deny that there may yet be new epic experiences which shall be echoed in heroic verse? Since Milton, there has been no great epic written in any Western tongue; no bard has sung the strife of nations and the deeds of warriors in such strains as those of Vergil and the *Song of Roland*. But no sane critic will predict that men shall forever be denied the hope of great poetry in the heroic mood. We and our children shall not be forever condemned to listen to *vers libre* and have our standards set by the vacant spaces in the popular magazines.

For truly—while we are speaking of fashions—we may not neglect that most curious of all contemporary literary phenomena—the modern craze for free verse. Twenty years ago, when Browning and Tennyson and Whitman were dead, when the last of the New England group passed away in Lowell, when Stevenson and Kipling seemed to have no rivals but the thin notes of Dobson and Watson, before Francis Thompson had come into vogue, men were saying that poetry was dying out. (Despite the flood of verse of the last fifteen years, I am not sure that they were wrong!) But now what a change! Poets grow on every corner, self-labeled for the most

part—and are without form, if not void. Thin volumes of disjointed verse pour from the presses. The librarian who would keep his library abreast of the flood of alleged poetry must know the obscurest printers and publishers. Poetry magazines and annual anthologies alone provide a harvest of verse, and no crossroads is so forlorn that some lines from its rustic muse have not penetrated the magazines at least. To one whose notions of poetry are based on Homer and the Greek tragedians, on Horace and Lucretius, on Dante and Petrarch, on Chaucer and Shakespeare, on Goethe and Schiller, on Wordsworth and Keats and Shelley and Browning, to one whose birthright of English verse ranges from Ben Jonson to Burns and from Walter Scott to Matthew Arnold, it is rather hard to grow enthusiastic over *Spoon River Anthologies* and the whole tribe of what Potash and Perlmutter would dub modern "so-called, alleged" poets. It is truly like asking one whose ideas of musical form have been created by Beethoven to praise jazz and endure practice on the saxophone. Perhaps it can be done. The old order changeth—*tempora mutantur*—but it is a wrench to change with it, and some of us are not equal to the task. And yet modern free verse is perhaps, from a philosophic point of view, the counterpart of modern futurist and cubist painting and modern music and the theory of relativity! When

we remember how cacophonous Wagner seemed to the mid-century musicians and to the Parisian public who hissed *Tannhäuser*, when we recall the almost universal repugnance with which Whitman's earlier work was greeted, we wonder whether the trouble is with ourselves or with the newer forms of art. The trouble lies, in part at least, with those whose revolt from canons of form has led them to spurn beauty and nobility, to exalt the trivial, to mistake mere concatination of words for poetic feeling and expression. But it is hopeless to contend with their number, to endeavor to laugh them out of court. These newer poets are here—and they know it. They even go around lecturing and reading and almost selling their wares. As soon may we escape them as escape the playwrights—another modern invasion.

For few fashions have so swept the country as has the revival of the dramatic instinct in the American people. Coincident with the enormous expansion of the moving pictures at the expense of the acted and spoken drama—even, perhaps, because of the absence from many and many a town of any plays but the "movies," there has come a renewed, almost a re-created, interest in plays and in the dramatic art. I need not recall to you the history of the "little theatre" movement, nor rehearse the tale of the English and American and Irish play-wrights

of the past thirty years. That movement has been much more a literary than it has been a producing interest. Plays which thirty years since would have been acted only a few times by stock companies, and even other plays which achieved great theatrical success, would in earlier times quite likely have remained unprinted—the private property of their owners. Now, such plays are *read* by scores of thousands, for they quickly get out in book form. There is much reading, also, in groups and clubs, and an enormous and ever increasing amount of production of plays by amateurs purely for the fun of the thing. Pageants and plays have fairly swept the English teachers of our schools into the business of directing the acted drama. It is a sorry school in these days which does not produce several plays yearly, and our universities teem with comedy clubs and acting societies, frequently producing home-made plays. It is worthy of note that this literary revival of the drama has largely proceeded on wholesome lines. A sound instinct has for the most part kept the excesses of the contemporary stage out of the schools and colleges and dramatic clubs. And while the theatres in our great cities have shown in too many cases mere carnal exhibitions of half-naked female forms amid colored lights and resounding jazz, the revived interest in the printed drama and in amateur acting has held itself to

literary and truly dramatic ideals. Not that a Mother Grundy of my earlier day would not find much to reprehend on the amateur stage of today. She would find plenty—but she would generally be wrong in imputing evil to a freedom foreign to her own notions. Few fashions in books and letters have more significance than this revival of the literary drama. It is too early to predict its results —but that it is not a mere passing fad is the easiest of forecasts. The three decades which have seen Bernard Shaw, Barrie, Jones, Pinero, Fitch, Kennedy,—not to mention scores of others—have not been sterile. That literally thousands of young people have studied and acted the plays of these authors is of itself a fact of great import in considering the literary history of America. After all, as I said before, the readers, the audience, count in the librarian's view at least as much as the authors themselves, albeit differently. And when the readers act—however badly—the author has made an impression far deeper than that implied in mere perusal of his writings; yes, even deeper than that created by witnessing their production by really great actors. The play seen is but evanescent—the play acted has become a part of the actor's life.

It is, of course, a truism of literary history, that the novel became in the nineteenth century the fashionable literary vehicle of expression. We have

all been brought up on this doctrine. We are familiar with the precursors, Richardson and Fielding, Dean Swift and Defoe. We recall—but have we read?—Anne Radcliffe and Horace Walpole. We know our Scott, and we all love him still, however dull he may be to the jaded literary taste of our juniors. We honor Thackeray and George Eliot, and we treasure Dickens. All this is well-trodden ground. But have we been conscious of the subtle transition in the form of the novel and in its size? The three-volume tradition we know died long since —but what killed it? Was it the impatience of a sated public? I incline to the belief that it was rather the fashion of serial publication. The great English and American monthlies which competed for the prizes of their day had—and have—precise limits of space in any one month. Their editors knew just how many pages could be spared for any one novel running serially. The result is very visible. That rather sudden transition to a shorter form which marks such men as George Meredith and Thomas Hardy from Trollope, let us say, is far more a matter of magazine limits and serial rights than one of intrinsic need and definite literary canons. With the rise of the cheap magazine of enormous circulation, the serial rights become one of the chief sources of revenue to authors and publishers. Just how much publication of a novel in

the *Saturday Evening Post,* for example, means to an impecunious author we can only guess, but it is a consideration amply powerful to cause him to suit his length—if not other and more vital matters—to the requirements of the magazine editor. And a further result is that—once the fashion of reasonable brevity has been fixed—the only way an author can get around the popular requirement is by producing another novel with many of the same characters. Instead of three volume novels with one title, we now have three or more volumes with similar titles—and how we buy them! Not to rise to lofty heights, observe how Tarzan has raced through volume after volume. Can anyone count the Nick Carter tales? Would Mulford dare to change from the Bar-20 to any other cattle-brand? Truly the ways of fashion in letters are almost as far past finding out as the way of a man with a maid!

Mention of the magazine leads me to point out the greatest change in book fashions since printing began. Periodical publication is now truly *the* fashion of the day in all lines the world over. This form came into vogue in the seventeenth century with the *Journal des Savants* and other similar learned publications. For seventy-five years now it has been increasingly *the* mode for the publication of the results of study in any and all fields. Thousands of journals keep hundreds of thou-

sands of specialists abreast of the growth of knowledge in their several lines of investigation. Yea, more, thousands of other journals inform the banker, the merchant, the artisan, the tradesman, the professor, the teacher, even the librarian, what is going on in his field. The journals are usually about five years ahead of the books in every subject. They form the record of progress in the sciences and the arts, in the crafts and trades and occupations. They wax more numerous with every month and in every clime, despite rising costs of paper and presswork, and in the face of a severe mortality in journalistic circles. Well may the perplexed and devout librarian say with the Psalmist—"*Lord, how are they increased that trouble me!*" How to get, how to keep, how to index this mass of periodical and serial printed matter! We must have it—we never have enough journals—we never have enough indexes to the mass of original materials concealed beneath their multitudinous and multiform varieties of publication. Woe to the librarian who fails to get and to bind and to use these journals. They are the present-day mode of retailing (and frequently rehashing) thought and discovery. "Fractions drive me mad" was a favorite tag in my boyhood. How true of these days! It is not the sound and single volumes which come whole from the publisher which trouble us and bring our grey hairs in sorrow to the

grave. Rather it is these *lieferungen*, *heften*, *livraisons*, parts, fascicles, special numbers and supplements which do drive the poor librarian frantic. And how solid the satisfaction, how firm the reward which attends the completion and binding of any fractious and long-broken set! Journals—and still more journals—all printed on wood-pulp paper destined doubtless to disintegrate in the lifetime of these students of library economy—here you have the chief problem of the careful librarian of any research library. Will the fashion change? How long *can* it last? Will the whole literary output of the world soon be in periodicals? Shall we always be paying subscriptions, writing postcards for title pages and indexes, preparing for binding, paying for binding, buying older sets, renewing our worn-out *Poole's Index* and *Index Medicus?* These questions I leave with you to ponder. I and my generation shall never get away from journals; perhaps the journals will get away from you younger folk—by the simple process of chemical decomposition.

We have surveyed a few of the outward forms and fashions in the world of letters—forms which mark our day, our age. What of the spirit? Does fashion rule in the higher realms also? Yea, of a surety! far more than in the lower matters of shape and size and mode of publication. Looking at the temper of the time, seeking for its answer to the eternal ques-

tions of the spirit, for its ideals of the true, the beautiful and the good, striving to understand the drifts and currents of an age even more shifting and rapid in its changes than most periods of human experience, it hard not to be a mere shaker of the head, a *laudator temporis acti* of the familiar and age-old type. There are current fashions in the world of letters, fashions which boast a large and increasing following, which yet seem to many of us symptomatic of disease rather than a healthy revolt against the hampering limitations of an earlier time. Every age of license in the world's literature has dubbed its critics old fogies and committed literary crimes in the name of liberty. Generally it has abused its very freedom until its vogue of profanity or licentiousness has died a natural death—from its own rottenness. It is the prevailing fashion in certain circles in America, as in England, to throw decorum to the winds, to outrage decency, to exalt moral looseness and to portray the pathologic—all in the name of art. The process is a familiar one—and a sorry one. It has gone on before—in the Renaissance, at the Restoration, before and after the French Revolution, in decadent Rome and equally decadent Vienna and Paris. No really great name in the word of letters has ever risen (like a water lily) from this muck and mire. The apology for this neo-eroticism usually takes the form of flings at

Puritanism or at the New England conscience, and lards condemnation of bourgeois minds with profane references to Anthony Comstock and the W. C. T. U. Puritanism in England and America needs no defense from me. Its achievements are a matter of history—its unlovely parts were never more than minor portions of a great whole. But I venture to protest that if the neo-fleshly school will produce any poets like Milton or seers like Emerson they will have far firmer grounds to stand on than they now occupy. When I was a young man and attending the university I often noticed how the German producers of doctoral theses loved to find a flaw in Mommsen's history of Rome and ride to a Ph.D. degree on the discovery. So these violent outbursts against Puritanism in art and letters may serve to coin a few dollars—but will they advance the culture of the race? We have in America no lack of clean and strong writers—we can afford in our libraries to ignore the erotic purveyors of imitation European decadence, folk who imagine that Zola and Baudelaire and Richepin were the real Frenchmen of the nineteenth century. But their fashionableness sets a sore problem for us librarians who are keen to be up-to-date, to provide the talked-of books, to furnish our various publics with the best in current letters, and who are neither squeamish nor straight-laced. But we still have a duty to ourselves and to our folk—those who employ us. When

we buy a book for a public library we say in effect—"This is a book fit to be read." I can only urge real courage in dealing with the question. What is all right for folk of wide experience, mature judgment, broad acquaintance with literature—is this likewise fitting for the callow, the impressionable, the "meanly-lettered?" To state the question is to answer it. No library ever has enough money to buy even a major part of the current books. Its funds, then, should go for such as are clean and decent, inspiring and uplifting, stirring and vital. If we do not fear Mother Grundy is making our decisions,—and we should not—neither may we forget the responsibilities we have toward hundreds of young people. There is plenty of good, honest, decent, attractive, readable stuff at hand. Let the other sort go. Spend the money for real bread which satisfieth—and don't be afraid to say why you have done so!

Fashions change. I remember a visiting Canadian preacher in my boyhood who prayed for an hour and a quarter while the small boys stood first on one foot and then on the other and longed for the end. What show would he have to get a call to a church in Madison? And remembering him, I shall cease to speak further on fashions in books. But I could go on—so far, so far. The modes are legion. It is fine to be in a work where you may observe alike those of Greece and Rome and of present day Chicago.

That is the librarian's privilege. He is not wholly of one race or clime or day. The pleasant land of the troubadour and the frozen North are his equally. He may be burdened with his work, he may not have enough salary to dress in the mode, children and bores and women's clubs may take his time, but these are trifles. He lives in the spirit. He sits on his fence and sees the parade of books pass by—the gay and festive, the sad and sober, the youngest and oldest. He selects and he buys, he uses and he promotes. Some days he seems bowed beneath the hurrying and wearing service of the hour—but always a service of ideas, of things of the spirit, of books. He can be no slavish and blind follower of literary styles—though he can rejoice in most and may at will decline all save a nodding acquaintance with others. And his one comfort as he is driven from literary Dan to Beersheba, from poetry to essay, from tax report to Greek tragedy, from Vedic hymns to cowboy novels is that for him all these diversities represent but one thing only—fashions in books. Without this consciousness, his mind would doubtless undergo the mythical fate of the chameleon on the Scotch tartan. With it, he manages to retain his own personality, his ideals, his convictions, to find his joy in service, his solace in books old-fashioned and new, his hope in a deep humanity, his religion in the one unchanging Spirit in a world of change.

INDEX

Academies, transactions of, 286, 287
Adams, John, 167
Addison, Joseph, 123
Adult education and libraries, 226–251
Advertising for libraries, 194, 240
Aldus Manutius, 32
Alphabet, key to arrangement, 111
American Catalogue, 56
American Historical Association, Committee on Bibliography, 179, 180
American Library Association, 49, 169, 196, 252–269
——, *Booklist*, 147
——, Committee on cataloging rules, 129
——, Constitution, 262, 263
——, *Guide to . . . . American history*, 56
——, Publishing Board, 54
——, Survey, 264, 265
——, War Service, 199, 200, 254, 255, 258–261
American libraries, competence in books, 174, 175, 205, 206, 207
—— —— in service, 177, 178
Americanization, 247
Angell, J. B., 210
Astor Library, (N. Y.), 127, 184, 275
Atlases, training in use of, 112
Audubon, J. J., *Birds of North America*, 279
Author's name generally ignored, 106, 107
Ayer, E. E., 44

Bacon, Francis, 123
Bates Bequest, University of Michigan, 281
Berlin. Königl. Bibliothek, 91
Bible, English, 123
Bibliographer, 296
Bibliographical Society of America, 56, 180
Bibliography, 55
——, instruction in, 119, 299
Bibliophile, 37, 38, 45
Billings, John Shaw, 12, 169, 296
Bindings, 40, 313, 314
——, Italian, 35
Books, basis of libraries, 2
——, owned in homes, 236
——, production in U. S., 103, 104
——, —— in the world, 104

Booksellers' catalogs, 136
Book shops, not found in small towns, 238
—— ——, Rome, 28–32, 36
Boston Athenaeum Library, 87, 127, 147, 184
Boston Public Library, 51, 89, 176, 184, 191
Bradley, Justice Joseph Philo, 304
Bradshaw, Henry, 183
Branch libraries, 60, 193
British Museum, 6, 175, 276
—— —— *Catalogue*, 139
Brooklyn Library, 127, 184
Brown, John Carter, 44
Buffalo Library, 184

Card catalog, 83ff
—— ——, complexity, 133, 134
—— ——, future, 147, 148
—— ——, needs interpreter, 75
—— ——, size, 94, 95, 96, 131
—— ——, a tool, 132
—— ——, users, 132, 133
Catalog cards, printed, 54
Catalogers, scarcity of, 130
Cataloging, 125–148
——, permanence of, 147
——, teaching, 142
Cataloging experience, 143
Cataloging rules, Uniform, 53
Catalogs, card, *See* Card Catalog.
——, printed in book form, 127
Carnegie, Andrew. Gifts to libraries, 43, 50, 53, 61, 63, 167
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, 52
—— ——, book catalog, 129
—— ——, printed cards, 89, 90
Cervantes, 123
Charleston, S. C. Library Society, 101
Chemistry, libraries of, 181
Children's libraries, 59
Chicago libraries, coöperation between, 292
Chicago Public Library, 52
Cicero, 243
Circulation of books from libraries, 42
Clay, Henry, 167
Cleveland Public Library, 224, 293
Clubs and libraries, 248
Cogswell, J. G., 183
College and university libraries, 202–225
College curriculum, 219, 220
College, results of, 231
College student, attitude toward books, 121, 122
College students' reading, 117, 118
Collectors of books, 37, 62
——, gifts to libraries, 62
Columbia University. Avery Architectural Library, 62, 87
Columbia University Library, 52, 295

Commencement addresses, 165
Concilium Bibliographicum (Zürich), 55, 297, 298
Congresses, International, 284, 285
Conserving book rarities, 186
Continuation schools and libraries, 246
Continuations, cataloging, 85
Coöperation between libraries, 224
Coöperation in buying books, 291
Coöperative cataloging, 55
Cornell University Library, 51
—— —— —— Dante collection, 62
Cutter, C. A., 62, 127, 169, 183

Dante, 123, 243
Detroit Public Library, 224, 293
Dibdin, T. F., 147
Dictionaries in schools, 111, 112
District of Columbia Public Library, 52, 89
Doctoral dissertations, 280
Drama, modern, in America, 320, 321

Edison, Thomas A., 167
Education of masses, 227, 228, 229
Ehrle, Franz, Cardinal, 18, 20, 25
Emerson, R. W., 123, 328
English literature in college libraries, 205
Epic poetry, 317, 318
European history, sources, 180
Evans, Charles. *American Bibliography*, 56
Exhibits of books, 46, 47
Expeditions, scientific, publications, 282
Experience, value of, in reference work, 157, 158

Fashions in books, 304–330
Fashions in dress, 305, 306, 307
Field, H. H., 298
Fine arts, in college libraries, 212
Foch, Marshal, 252
Ford, Henry, 167
France. Bibliothèque Nationale, 175, 276
Free verse, 318
French literature, in libraries, 206

Garfield, James A., 49
Garnett, Richard, 183
Garrison, Fielding H., 296
Gebhart und Harnack, *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 145
Genealogical inquiries, 78
Goethe, 123
Green, R. H., 123

Hale, William G., 20
Hamilton, Alexander, 167
Harriman, Edward Henry, 167
Harvard University Library, 90, 101, 176, 180, 191, 275, 295
—— —— ——, printed cards, 89
High School libraries, 113
High School, results of, 230
Hill, Frank P., 260
Historic method in science, 278
History in American libraries, 208, 209
History of science, college libraries, 217
Hobbies for librarians, 10, 11
Homer, 123
Hopkins, Anderson H., 4
Hopkins, Mark, 223
Hosmer, J. K., 12
Hughes, Charles E., 140
Huntington, Henry E., 276
Hutcheson, David, 4

Incunabula, 310, 311
Index Medicus, 211, 296, 326
Indexes of books, 109
Institut International de Bibliographie (Brussels), 55
Instruction in use of libraries, 69, 114, 115
International Catalogue of Scientific Literature, 55, 297
Inter-library loans, 245
Isolated students, 250

Jackson, Andrew, 167
Jefferson, Thomas, 167
——, ——, Library, 99, 100
Jewett, C. C., 183
John Carter Brown Library, 62, 163, 175
John Crerar Library, 163, 175, 290
—— —— ——, printed cards, 89
Journals, 287, 288, 289, 290, 324

Labor unions and libraries, 249
Larned, J. N., 169, 183, 187, 256
Leaders, how trained, 168
Leadership, 165–174
—— based on knowledge, 169
—— in a democracy, 170, 171
Leland Stanford Jr. University Library, 290
Lenox, James, 190
Lenox Library (N. Y.), 184
Leo XIII, Pope, 27
Librarian, knowledge of catalogs, etc., 6
——, memory for titles, 3
——, superficial acquaintance, with books, 13
Librarian's attitude toward books, 314, 315
Librarianship, defined, 125, 126
Libraries, American—characteristics, 41
——, European, characteristics, 42

Libraries, growth in numbers, 191
——, growth in size, 191
—— in U. S., development, 102, 128, 129
——, use of, by students, 28, 29, 70
Library buildings, 50ff, 59
—— ——, colleges, 212, 213
—— ——, universities, 218, 219
Library commissions, 56, 57
Library Journal, 127
Library of Congress, 4, 52, 67, 176, 184, 185, 191, 195, 276, 288
—— —— ——, card catalog, 115
—— —— ——, Jefferson Collection, 99, 100, 101
—— —— ——, *List of Subject headings*, 93
—— —— ——, printed catalog cards, 54, 55, 129, 147
—— —— ——, Reading Room, 138, 157
—— —— ——, Union catalog of subjects, 88, 89, 90, 97, 98
Library schools, 61
Lincoln, Abraham, 167
Linderfelt, Klas August, 127
Linnaeus, C., 280
Loan desk assistants, 72, 73
—— ——, inquiries at, 71
Lowell, James R., 168, 220

McGill University Library, 291
Macaulay, T. B., 123
Madison, James, 167
Mai, Cardinal, 15
Manuscripts, mediaeval, in American libraries, 44, 308, 309
Marshall, John, 167
Milton, John, 123, 328
Milwaukee Public Library, 52
Mommsen, Theodore, 328
Montaigne, 123
Museums, publications of, 281

Natural sciences in college libraries, 211
Newark Free Public Library, 52
Newberry Library, 51
Newspapers, 228, 229
—— in libraries, 234, 235
Newton, Isaac. *Principia*, 123
New York Public Library, 3, 13, 52, 163, 176, 185, 190, 191
—— —— printed cards, 89
—— Ford Collection, 62
New York Society Library, 101
New York University Library, 52
Notre Dame University Library, 276
Novel, form, 323

Ohio libraries, 224
"Old-fashioned" librarian, 183, 184, 186
Open access in college libraries, 223
"Open access" libraries, 59, 67

Panizzi, Anthony, 183
Panizzi's *Rules*, 136
Parkman, Francis, 123
Pastoral poetry, 316, 317
Peabody Institute Library (Baltimore), 87
Pellechet, Mlle. Marie, 147
Percent of college income for library, 222
Perkins, Frederic Beecher, 127
Personality, 198
Philadelphia. Library Company, 101
Pius XI, Pope, 25
Plantin Press, Antwerp, 33
Poetry, modern, 319, 320
Poole, Wm. Frederick, 12, 62, 169, 183, 185
Poole's Index, 115, 326
Princeton University Library, 52
——, Morgan Collection of Vergils, 62
——, Garrett Arabic MSS., 62
Princeton University. "Preceptors," 119
Printers, early, 309
Proctor, Robert, 147
Providence Public Library, 52
Prussia. University libraries, *Gesammtkatalog*, 91
Public libraries, 191, 192
Puritanism, 328
Putnam, Herbert, 188, 261

Rare books in libraries, 39, 44, 45, 47, 48
Readers (in libraries), assistance to, 65ff
Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, 115
Reading habit, conserving, 239, 241, 242
Reading of the masses, 233
Record of knowledge, in books, 173, 174
Recreational reading, 177, 242, 243
Reference books, 152, 153, 159, 160
Reference librarian, 5
——, functions, 150, 151, 163, 164
——, relations to university faculties, 77
Reference libraries, 154
Reference rooms, 153, 154
Reference work, 137, 138, 149–164
Religion, books on, in college libraries, 208
Required reading, college entrance, 117
Research, provision for, college libraries, 215, 216, 217, 223, 224
"Reserved" books, 76, 118
Riant Collection, Harvard University Library, 62
Richardson, Ernest C., 180
Rockefeller, John D., 167
Rockefeller Foundation, 298
Rome, 24, 25, 28ff

Roosevelt, Theodore, 167
Royal Society (London). *Catalogue of Scientific Papers*, 211, 297
Royal Society (London). *See also* International Catalogue of Scientific Literature

Saturday Evening Post, 324
Schiller, Friederich, 123
——, fac-simile of letter, 7
Science, libraries of, in U. S., 277, 278
——, method of teaching, 272, 273
——, historical method in, 274
——, record of, 270–303
Selection of books, 110, 328, 329
Serials, record in libraries, 85, 86
Shakespeare, 123
Sizes of books, 312, 313
Slavic bibliography, 180
Social sciences, books on, in college libraries, 210
Specialists in libraries, 155
Specialization in libraries, 163
"Special" libraries, 161, 195
Spofford, Ainsworth Rand, 4, 169, 183, 184, 187, 188
Standardization of library technique, 195
Stanyhurst, Richard, 232
Study of community, by librarian, 162
Subject bibliographies, 92ff
Subject headings in catalogs, 93, 94, 96, 97
Sumner, Charles, 167
Survey of current library practice, 196

Thwaites, Reuben Gold, 12, 169
Tischendorf, Constantine, 15
Titles of books, 108, 109
Transactions of societies, etc., 84
Transcripts, 79, 80
Traveling libraries, 57, 58

Union shelf list, 141
United Engineering Societies Library (New York), 175
United States Army Engineer School. Library, 89
United States Army. Surgeon General's Library, 89, 175, 277, 296
United States Army, War College. Library, 89
United States Bureau of Education. Library, 89
United States Bureau of Fisheries. Library, 89
United States Bureau of Labor. Library, 89
United States Department of Agriculture, book needs, 178
United States Department of Agriculture. Library, 89
United States Documents Office Library, 89

United States Geological Survey, Library, 89
United States Catalog, 56
University of California Library, 290
University of Chicago Library, 290, 295
——, printed cards, 89
University of Illinois Library, 52, 290
University of Iowa Library, 290
University of Michigan Library, 66, 73, 119, 144, 224, 276, 293, 294, 295, 301–303
University of Minnesota Library, 290
University of Nebraska Library, 290
University of Washington Library, 290
University of Wisconsin Library, 290
Use of books, 99ff
Utley, George B., 260

Vatican Library (Rome), 15ff
Vergil, 123
Viage de Sutil y Mexicana, 139

Washington, George, 167
Webster, Daniel, 167
Western Reserve Historical Society (Cleveland), 293
Westinghouse, Goerge, 167
Wilkes Exploring Expedition, 283
Wilson, Woodrow, 167, 168, 227
Winsor, Justin, 12, 62, 169, 183
Wisconsin Free Library Commission, 43
Wisconsin. State Historical Society, 43, 52, 175
World War, 252, 253
Wyer, J. I., Jr., 261

Yale University Library, 176, 191, 295
——, Semitic manuscripts, 62

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Sans Tache

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